TRAVERS MADGE

A MEMOIR.

BROOKE HERFORD.

PACIFIC UNITARIAN SCHOOL FOR THE MINISTRY
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TRAVERS MADGE:

A MEMOIR

BY

BROOKE HERFORD.

"And trouthe thou shall delivir 'tis no drede."

—CHAUCER.

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TO

MR. AND MRS. J. WITHERS DOWSON,

OF NORWICH,

TRAVERS MADGE'S

LIFE-LONG AND CLOSEST FRIENDS;

AND

MY KINDEST COUNSELLORS AND HELPERS

IN WRITING THIS MEMOIR.

50

TO THE READER.

A year and a half ago, on the death of Travers Madge, the teachers of the Lower Mosley Street Schools, with other friends and fellow-workers in his later Manchester labours, were anxious that a Service should be held in his memory. I, as one who had known him very intimately in his earlier Manchester life, was asked to undertake this.

I had for fifteen years been absent from Manchester, and consequently had not seen much of him during his later life; but the information which I obtained with a view to the memorial sermon interested me very deeply, and when various friends expressed a wish that I should either print that sermon or prepare some fuller Memorial of their old friend, I willingly consented.

That it has not been an easy task will be readily understood; but it has been most truly a labour of love. To Travers Madge I owe more, in the way of those influences which helped me in my early manhood, than to any other; and it has been a very deep pleasure at once to read his letters and study the thoughts and efforts of his later life, and to feel that by what I was doing I might be the means of making his influence felt by others.

With one so outspoken, so broad in sympathy, and with such an

abhorrence of sectarianism as Travers, and yet whose actual views changed so considerably as did his, it could scarcely be but that comments on opinions and parties should sometimes occur in his letters that are liable to give a certain amount of pain. I believe, however, that those who knew him, and care to read this Memoir, will feel that it is a good and wholesome thing to know how these things really seemed to a spirit so simple and truthful and pure as our friend's, even though now and then some sharper criticism touches themselves. A few of these strictures note his sense of defects in the churches with which he was associated in his later life. If there are any who are disposed to wish these had not been published, I will only ask them to bear me witness that, at any rate, I have been still less sparing in inserting his far severer words about those views of his earlier years which I myself hold dear, believing them, as he once believed them, to be the simple truth as it is in Jesus. I have taken Chaucer's line

> *"And trouthe thee shall delivir 'tis no drede,"*

as my motto with regard alike to what I had to tell of a life-story not without its elements of sadness, and also with regard to the insertion of his plain and searching comments on those subjects of religion which were his one absorbing interest.

Higher Broughton, Manchester,
December 1st, 1867.

CONTENTS.

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	PAGE
CHILDHOOD	1
MANCHESTER LIFE: AT COLLEGE	9
NORWICH: 1845—1847	30
CORNWALL: JANUARY TO MARCH, 1848	42
MANCHESTER: 1848—1850	51
THE THORN IN THE FLESH	75
CHANGES	86
THE OLD TIES OF WORK LOOSENING	103
BROKEN YEARS: 1852—1858	123
MANCHESTER ONCE MORE: 1859—1861	137
BROADENING VIEWS	148
THE HOME MISSION	156
THE LANCASHIRE DISTRESS	168
FADING AWAY	183

A MEMOIR.

CHILDHOOD.

At Thorpe, near Norwich, in 1823, were living Thomas Madge, minister of the Octagon Chapel in that old city, and Harriet his wife; and on October 12th, in that year, there was born to them a son whom they named Travers, after his mother's family.

He was a bright, sunny, happy child, passionate withal, but with loving winning ways, and a sweet pure face. Fond of preaching—mostly a favourite play with ministers' children—but unlike most he insisted with passionate energy on doing it in chapel; and there is a quaint reminiscence of his having to be carried kicking and screaming out of the staid precincts of Essex Street Chapel, in London, where on seeing his father (who had recently removed thither) preparing to preach, he insisted on standing up and giving out a text himself.

It is, however, in very different reminiscences of his childhood that we trace some real promise of the character of his after life. At five years old Travers is already at school—at Mr. Clennell's, Hack-

ney—only to return home, however, in a year or so, ill, consumptive tendencies already shewing themselves. It is in connection with these long, weary months of illness, in the Essex Street home in the heart of the huge city, involving some painful operation, and followed by three years of feeble childhood, that we come upon the first gleams of that inner light which glowed so brightly through his after life. In after years he wrote some slight recollections of those days, in which he speaks wonderingly of how, though all the details of the operation were vividly impressed upon his mind, so that he could almost see "Uncle Ben" (Mr. Travers, the surgeon,) looking out his instruments, and his mother's pale, watching face, he had no recollection whatever of the pain of it. He says, "All that I remember, is my mother laying her hands upon my shoulders, and looking calmly and steadily upon it all, without my ever knowing that more than all the pain I felt was felt by her as well." All his impressions were of the tender joys which that illness brought with it. In speaking of those days, he adds,

"It appears to me to be much easier to remember any pleasure that is passed, than to remember pain. When the pain has done the work for which it was sent, it seems to leave the mind and be forgotten; but pleasures, those pleasures I mean which are given us by God, never leave the mind, but we are enabled to live them over and over, through the kind help of our memory. I never in my whole life was happier than when lying in bed, and looking out upon a dead wall; for there was ever one with me who, by some unknown means, always made it cheerful. There she sat by my side whole days long, always giving me what I wanted, bringing me continually some new thing which

she had bought or some kind friend had given, telling me little tales which I have often wished I could remember, and singing songs which I should know well if I ever heard them sung again."

By and by, when he could leave his bed, his mother carried him into a little yard behind the house, and placed him where the sun shone :—

"That sun which God has placed so high in the heavens, and which shines so bright as it goes on its journey from day to day, paying its cheerful visits to many a dark and dismal spot, and making them almost smile in its glad warmth and light."

What times, those, to the soul of a sensitive child, passionately attached to his mother, when she sat by his side, and talked to him of God and duty, and of brave men who had had greater pain than his to bear; and read to him, or sung to him with that sweet expressiveness of which only mothers know the secret;—

"Then there were the Temple Gardens, not far from our house, where we used to spend hours, reading and working, and looking at the boats and packets, and all the lively scenes and changes on the river. My mother used to carry me down, day after day, to these gardens, though she was not strong and I was rather heavy. Her going out was indeed almost as much confined to our little yard and the Temple Gardens as my own. She succeeded, however, in all that she desired, for I never thought myself in a sad or pitiable condition. As far as I can tell, I was quite as happy as my brother and sister were, whose health was good, and whose limbs were sound."

Then we have a glimpse of him, a little weakly lad, drawn about upon the Brighton sands. One day his carriage goes out of bounds, and the boy who drags

it, having first tempted him to this in order to go and see a steampacket starting for Dieppe, afterwards persuades little Travers to tell a lie to conceal the heinous infraction. Poor little lad, what a sin to have upon his timid sensitive conscience! *Here* was the pain of those half-forgotten years: not Uncle Ben's operating knife, but that untruth, and his mother's letter about it. "It is not possible for me to tell you how serious and solemn her words were, nor how full of deepest, tenderest love. It almost broke my heart to read them."

At this time he is at Miss Mc. Keowne's preparatory school at Brighton. He is barely eight years old, but, when he gets a little stronger, what he loves most is to rise in the early morning before any one else is stirring, to get all his little lessons prepared, so that he may help the younger boys with their lessons in his spare hours through the day. One day, as he sits thus in the school-room, a lady stopping in the house passes through for her early morning walk. Travers ran to open the door for her, "and as she passed me, she thanked me, and laying her hand upon my head, said—'Do you know who said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not!'" Years after he tells this, in one of his letters, as something he never forgot. Other influences are beginning to work within him also with strong stirrings of soul. On Sundays he goes to a church where a "Mr. Anderson, since made one of the Royal chaplains, preached. There was something about his mode of preaching, that made me feel as if I understood and entered into every

word he spoke." That is one of the powerful impressions of early religion that he never forgets in after years. Another impression is that of the times, after service was over, when he stopped behind "to listen to Mr. Anderson, while he gathered the boys connected with the schools around the altar, and then talked to them, and asked them questions." Thoughtful little lad, listening, and answering the questions in his mind, and going home to muse upon them, till they were told in his letters to his mother, or mingled with his prayers.

Poor boy—not long to have that helpful influence of a mother's love! Before he is twelve years old, he is almost broken-hearted to hear that his mother is lying very ill—nigh to death. Later on, when still but a youth of seventeen, he writes very touchingly of that sad day:—

"I have been thinking of my mother lately, very much, of the day when I first heard that we must lose her. I thought an orphan must be very unhappy. I did not know what *joys* they feel. There are joys for the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, which none but they can feel. I always feel, too, that she knows all my joys, and all my griefs; and that her spirit is by when I offer up a prayer to God, as she always used to be with me when a child at that heavenly time."

But these are the thoughts of later years. At the time, as he goes from school to meet the funeral near Hastings, he is only heart-broken at the loss, and it is with the greatest difficulty he is prevented from throwing himself down into the grave. Thenceforth that mother is one of the saintly memories that people his

lonely hours, often spoken of with tenderest affection even to the end.

From the preparatory school, he went to Mr. Malleson's school at Hove House, Brighton, where he spent many happy years. Still the old character—passionate, impulsive, full of ardent aspirations, always eager to do any one a kindness. That old trait, which we saw in him as a little child, still characteristic of his later school life—always ready to help the other boys with their lessons, especially in mathematics, of which he was very fond, and for which he shewed remarkable aptitude.

In 1838, he left school, to enter on the wider field of college life, removing to London, to attend University College, until his matriculation in 1840. All through this college life, the old character is growing into all it promised. The same ardent, almost passionate nature, taking up strong enthusiasms, and following them out with an eagerness which could brook no interference. Naturally of a hot, passionate temper, he was already trying to school it into gentleness, and with regard to its worst ebullitions, had succeeded. But it gave a tone to all his early years. This college life was full of trouble, such trouble as was inevitable to a fiery young soul, trying to construct a perfect life, with a stormy contempt for precedents and proprieties and the prejudices of others, and withal an unconscious tendency to regard any established order of things as on the face of it wrong. Prizes, examinations, honors, all created trouble between him and the professors. He would have nothing to do with such

things, wouldn't receive them, wouldn't try for them, could hardly be induced even to go in for ordinary examinations. He thought they all appealed to low motives, and were injurious to the students. Yet people loved him, conceited and self-opinionated as at present he undoubtedly was. How could they help it? For the bright beauty of the boy was developing into a face of such spiritual joyousness and sweetness; that early love of holy things was growing into such a strong earnestness in duty and sacrifice, and into such an utter, almost pitiful abhorrence of everything false and mean and impure, as made him even already an influence for good to all who came in contact with him.

During the two years he was in London, he began to teach in the Sunday School connected with Carter Lane Chapel—an old Presbyterian Chapel, dating back to the times when the city was a stronghold of early Nonconformity, but at this time decaying like many another of the city churches, in the exodus of middle-class life towards the suburbs. Trying to adapt itself to the wants of the poorer population now surrounding it, its congregation had lately begun a Sunday school, and were working very earnestly at it. Here came Travers, still quite a lad himself, and from the very first he threw himself into this work with an instinctive aptitude and delight. No mere perfunctory teacher, spasmodic in attendance, getting through the teaching hour in some sort of listless fashion on the Sunday,—his class became his great and delightful interest. The study of the lads' characters, the longing to get

some real hold of their souls, sympathy with the very roughness and hardness of their often neglected and squalid home life, seemed to have a kind of fascination for him. He was constantly seeking out the most distressed abodes in the lowest parts of London, and trying to get hold of the lads he found there. Ah, already the opening of the heart into that wonderful sympathy with misery and wretchedness, even with the degraded and the outcast, which was the secret both of his weakness and his power, and which in after years, while it gave a strange intensity to his efforts and appeals on their behalf, sometimes also made him feel an irresistible longing to go right down into their lost hopeless life, to share their lot and suffer their misery.

MANCHESTER LIFE: AT COLLEGE.

In 1840, Manchester College was removed from York to Manchester, to a roomy old brick mansion in Grosvenor Square, just on the outskirts of the town; and among the first students who joined it in its new quarters was Travers Madge. An old educational foundation, dating back, as the "Warrington Academy" whose place and prestige it took, to the middle of the eighteenth century, it has been the glory of Manchester New College, alone among the theological schools of England, to have faithfully preserved its old Nonconformist character as a school of free theology. From its earliest times, when it numbered among its professors Dr. Aikin, Dr. Enfield, and Dr. John Taylor, it has ever simply laid this injunction on its students—to study the Scriptures, and to think freely and reverently for themselves. Established by the English Presbyterian congregations which, based on perfectly open trusts, were throughout the last century passing quietly through gradual processes of change from Calvinism to Arianism, and thence at last into views which only waited for the impulse of Priestley and Lindsey to avow themselves Unitarian, the College was never suffered to degenerate into a school for teaching any one of these phases of a faith which was constantly progressing. Practically confined to educating men drawn from these churches and destined

for their ministry, because no other churches would send their young men to, or receive ministers from, a training so free, it still remained true to its fundamentally unsectarian position; and inculcated perfect openness of thought as its noblest contribution towards the attainment of truth. And never, certainly, was this old traditional character more faithfully maintained, than at the time when Travers Madge entered it. John James Tayler in the chair of ecclesiastical history, James Martineau in philosophy, and Francis William Newman, classical professor, gave to its whole life a tone of broad and earnest freedom, the influence of which the old students of those years, however they may afterwards have changed in religious opinions, have never ceased to feel. How strongly the character of Travers Madge was affected by this atmosphere of freedom, the course of his after life will sufficiently shew. None perhaps of his class-mates underwent greater theological changes than he did; but through them all he preserved his original broad and catholic spirit of appreciation of all that was good in every church, and of sympathy with persons of very different views from his own.

Of his intellectual studies during the five years which he passed at Manchester New College, there is not much to tell. Always a faithful and earnest student, and in mathematics shewing remarkable ability, his troubles were only such as came of his abhorrence of conventionality, and dislike to act either on the authority of college rules and precedents, or on the spur of the feeling of the hour among his fellow-students.

Into his regular college work he seems to have entered with a strong desire to do his best. A few weeks after entering Manchester New College, he writes to his Norwich home that he has "only five hours every week for everything except meals, sleep, and *work* at or for college. These five hours (not an hour a day) must include exercise, reading newspapers, any book I wish to look into, writing to you, and to my father at Highbury, and calling upon friends, and likewise reveries which will come over me; is not this hard work?" Close work indeed, especially as he was beginning that course of hard bare living, which in time grew to be a habit with him; for in the same letter he says, "I *live* upon *potatoes* and *bread;* to this is added, at your and my father's request, a quarter of a pound of meat." In a little while, however, his work was lessened by three hours a day, and we find him able to take long walks, and writing pleasantly of finding hedges and fields and little cottages near Manchester which at first had seemed such a dreary waste of bricks.

But though doing his work diligently, he did not take kindly to college life as a whole. Its habits seemed to him to have in them too much of rule, too little reliance upon the high principle and fidelity of the students. "The trouble of writing I do not care for;" he writes, but he won't prepare for examinations; considers that "examinations of all sorts are an unfair way of finding out what a person knows; that an examination for prizes in a college is unchristian; for whatever can be more wicked than to excite rivalry and bad

feelings, corrupting the hearts of young persons." So he will "have nothing more to do with them" than he "can possibly help." In such thoughts, carried out with that fiery earnestness into which his ardent nature was now turning itself, it is easy enough to see the elements of a stormy time at college.

One thing was remarkable in him,—the fresh and joyous spirit of religiousness which pervaded his college life. There was no constraint about it. The college prayers every morning, led by the students in turn, and which many affected to dislike as a mere formality, were to him a beautiful and helpful reality. And at his lodgings he always read the Scriptures with the old house-keeper with whom he lived, and they had prayers together at night. Well might she write, "He is quite a comfort to me; he is so gentle, so good, so kind. I never met with one so young so bent upon going about doing good. Where he is seems heaven on earth." Those about him felt the presence of this deep religiousness in him, in his gayest as in his gravest moods. An old friend who lived with him during these college days, writes to me that the time he specially chose for composing his prayers was when he returned to his lodgings, stimulated by the enjoyment of a happy evening among his friends. "That," he said, "was the best time to write a prayer."

It is not, however, his college life, whether by its influences of broad and catholic thought, or its intellectual discipline, or its student friendships, that gives the strongest interest to this period. That which

most of all helped to form his character, and gave the colouring to his after-life, was his connection with the Lower Mosley Street Sunday Schools.

He had begun Sunday school teaching in London, but under great difficulties and discouragements, for the school to which he there joined himself had been but lately formed, and the rough unkempt lads of the London courts and alleys did not take kindly to steady Sunday school ways. But in Manchester he found things very different. The character of the factory population in the north of England, with its sturdy independence, its frank outspokenness, and withal, its strong susceptibility alike to influences of order and of kindness, was just suited at once to appreciate such an one as Travers, and to shew its very best capacities under his influence. And, moreover, he found a large and admirably organized school, with a numerous band of older scholars—young men and women, many of them the pick of the factory class—just ready to welcome such a helper and worker as he was. Accordingly, from the first he threw himself into every part of his work at the Lower Mosley Street Schools, with fresh and joyous enthusiasm. Every one loved him. The scholars in other classes longed to be placed in his class. The little ones would run up to him in the street for a kind word, and that sweet smile he ever had for children. There was hardly a rough lad in all the school who wouldn't have done anything for him. All his leisure time was passed in the pursuits thus opened to him; visiting the homes of his scholars, taking long country walks with them,

having them to tea at his lodgings, and making himself entirely one with them.

"I am leaving off butter," he writes, "and tea will, I have no doubt, soon give way to water. And then I may have the Sunday school boys come to drink tea with me sometimes (on such occasions, of course, I must break my rule, because I shall be doing good by breaking it). I have got all the directions of the boys, and shall begin calling this week, and I mean to get them to call upon me. And when summer comes, I hope I shall take walks with them sometimes."

He speaks of the opportunities of this kind of association with the greatest delight, and of "the mines of goodness" he found in the boys. Here is a little passage, which gives an insight into his feeling about Sunday schools, in a letter written during his first year at Manchester, and when he was still but about seventeen:

"If there had been Sunday schools in our Saviour's time, I have no doubt he would have taught in them when he was my age. Would not it be a beautiful thing to think about, to picture to oneself Christ teaching in a Sunday school, with his arm folded round one boy, his hand resting on the head of another, his face smiling, his lips uttering such words as would make the boys love him as much as he loved them."

And here, written about the same time, perhaps a few months later, we have another glimpse of him, and of his power over his scholars without any use of discipline, in a letter to that dearest of his friends who seemed almost to take the place of his lost mother, and to whom he poured out his every thought and experience:—

"*Manchester, February 14th,* 1841.

"To-night I have double cause to be happy, for you have no idea how attentive my class was this afternoon. I may safely say that I never before had anywhere a class anything like so attentive—quite quiet,—all listening, all ready to ask questions; and yet there were fifteen, and noise all about, so that it was with great difficulty I could, at the very stretch of my voice, make myself heard. This is to me a sufficient proof of the efficacy of those principles which it seems most of the teachers are so unwilling to adopt to their full extent. They seem strange to the boys; for the teacher of the next class, in order to make his class quiet, pointed out mine as an example, whereupon the boys observed—'they have got such a rum teacher.' I suppose it is not wrong for me to go on so much about this, for it is not that I am thinking of myself; it is that I am rejoiced to see the triumph of principles so broadly stated in the New Testament, and yet so unwillingly received—laughed at as Quixotic and imaginary."

No wonder that, throwing himself into his work in such a spirit, those who came under his influence almost idolized him, and look back upon that school time, and will do to their dying day, as the most blessed influence under which they had ever come; and not much wonder, either, that Travers himself grew so to love the whole place and all the associations connected with it, that Manchester came to be to him almost as "his own city," to which, after restless intervals of work or illness in other places, he always returned as the home of his happiest and strongest life.

In a quiet life, uneventful, yet sparkling with zest and interest and enthusiasm born of the fresh spirit with which he met its homeliest, incidents and threw his whole soul now into the excitements and protests

of college life, now into the classes and meetings and excursions of the school work which absorbed his leisure, his college course passed quickly on. We do not hear much about college in his letters: now and then some glimpse of it. We have allusions to the "orations" that he was writing, as the college themes were called:—"The one for next week is about having two kings, like the Spartans. I show that it is bad to have a king at all, and that two kings are worse than one;" upon which it is not surprising to find that Professor Newman wrote, as his comment, "You are a zealous democrat!" Here and there, too, we have some mention of things that struck him in the lectures, as when he writes, "What is sentimentality, please? I particularly want to know. Mr. Martineau has frightened me about it—'that consumption of intellectual health' he called it, and everything else that was bad." Then, the examinations are coming on; and he finds, for the first time, that they are in public, and he will have to answer publicly "before the K——s, and the H——s, and the W——s, and the parsons, and such a quantity of dreadful people," and determines that he will not stand the examination. At the same time, he is full of plans by which he may save his father the expense of his lectures, some £25. a-year, if this resolve throws him off the foundation. He will lodge with poor people at eight shillings a week, and so save five shillings, and economize every way. "I have been earning sixpence to-day," he writes, a week or two later, "by carrying some book-shelves from the College here, to

the amusement of the factory boys;" and he even dashes out into a "resolve to see whether somebody hasn't got a horse to hold, or something of that kind." Then other interests occur. In 1841, we have in his letter a faint echo of the wave of Chartist disturbance which in that year passed over the factory districts. A few weeks later, O'Connel was in Manchester, "come to make a speech on the repeal of the Union;" and next day, "I saw the great Anti-Corn Law procession: I think it consisted of about sixteen thousand persons." Such matters, however, were too much outside the deeper interests of his life to make much impression upon him. More to him is the death of Dr. Channing:

"*Manchester, Nov. 7th*, 1842.

"We have had a beautiful sermon from Mr. Tayler about Dr. Channing, and then after it came the beautiful hymn beginning—

'Friend after friend departs—
Who has not lost a friend?'

to the most touching, simple, plaintive air in minor I ever heard. I first heard of his death last Sunday evening. I longed then to write to you, and have longed ever since; for at such a time one wants a word with those who enter into every feeling. You too, have felt him to be a friend:—how very, very many must also have felt him to be their friend! What a true and noble, what a Christian spirit was his! Nothing that was low or trifling ever there, but in everything he was exalted. A catholic spirit; a noble idea of man; a reverence and love for Christ, and above all, God, was with him always. Every thought he utters seems as though God was dwelling in him,—and so indeed He was. God's holy spirit found an abiding place in his mind.

"What a blank seems left now that he is gone. Never can we look forward any more to those little books he was continually

blessing the world with; and it is such a feeling that he is gone from amongst us. It has seemed a sort of blessing and life to the world to know and feel that he was one amongst us; but now he has gone to bless another world."

More in his way, too, is it to dwell upon the settlement of his dear and close friend, Philip Carpenter, (who had just left the same college,) at Stand, near Manchester. With him, somewhat stronger in character, while heart and soul with Travers in abhorrence of luxury and in devotion to duty, Travers plans to lodge in the village, some five miles from Manchester, where, in true apostolic spirit, his ministry was about to open. Travers writes with great delight of this new plan; speculating on a milk-cart as a feasible conveyance to college every morning, as otherwise the Bury coach would involve the wasteful expenditure of four pounds a year! Then we have his account of his friend's ordination:—

"*October* 11, 1841.

"Philip's ordination, I dare say you want to know about. I wish I could tell you about it, but I quite despair. The sort of feelings which such a beautiful rite excites cannot be conveyed. Every part was perfect. Mr. Wellbeloved referred to Dr. Carpenter in a very touching way, and Mr. Robberds' right hand of Christian-fellowship was most touching of all. It was managed in the most simple way; the introductory service from the reading-desk: Philip's statement from a centre pew, which was not at all confined to the persons engaged in the service, three ladies and another gentleman or two were there. Mr. Wellbeloved's charge followed from the pulpit: Mr. Tayler's address to the congregation from the pulpit: the right-hand of fellowship in the pew. Mr. Robberds said, after working up our feelings, 'I do, indeed, hold out the right-hand of Christian fellowship,

(shaking hands with Philip). God bless you,' he said, and so he went on: there was hardly a dry eye in the chapel, and Philip was quite overcome; and then in the evening again all was good. I only wish you had been there. It is a thing I can never forget."

Thenceforward this little parsonage at Stand became one of his favourite haunts. The Committee of the College declined, indeed, to sanction his living so far away; but every Saturday for many months he hurries off from Manchester, as soon as lectures are over, to spend Saturday and Sunday at Stand. There he soon has his own class in the little Sunday school, to which, by particular request, some of the most troublesome lads are transferred; and on Saturday evenings goes round visiting his scholars at their homes, to the amazement of the people, who, as he tells in a half-comical tone in his letters, could not at first understand what he came for, and only after some wondering parley at the door consented to his going in. Philip is to him as a spiritual father, influencing him when no one else can. Even against his authority, however, he sometimes rebels. He cannot understand why one so good as Philip doesn't share in his vehement disapproval of all prizes. "He has a horrid doctrine that as the Jews made use of sacrifices, and other things of that kind, so prizes may be used with children,"—an accommodation to the weakness of human nature which Travers will denounce, even if propounded by his dearest friend. He stands up stoutly, too, against the efforts of his friends to take care of his health. "Mrs. Carpenter," he writes, (Philip's mother) "has given me seven rules which I am to follow. Never to go out

without a great coat, and a variety of others. It is such a way of taking care of oneself, and a way I can never follow!" and so, even to his friends at Norwich,—"I must positively refuse the flannel waistcoats: my cold is gone; and it is a wicked thing to waste money extravagantly."

Whether this fiery impatience of over-coats, flannel, and general taking care of himself, combined with his natural tendency to consumption, had anything to do with it I know not; but in a few months he had to give up these Stand visits, and was back spending his Sundays at Lower Mosley Street as before. More and more he felt that this was his true home.

"You cannot tell what it was to go back to the school again. I taught two classes, the first in the morning, the seventh in the evening: it was most delightful. In the one class we read the fifth book of Irish lessons, on geology; in the other the New Testament: in both they were all straining to hear, quite unhappy to lose a word, asking questions and talking themselves;—and so many hearty welcomes back there were. It is the school of schools!"

And here, again, we have a little sketch of one of his Sundays, beautifully suggestive of the work he was doing, and of the spirit in which he was doing it.

"*Manchester, May 1st,* 1843.

"I have been spending such a happy—no end of happy—Sunday. Mr. Wicksteed has been preaching for the schools, and as the children were to come to the chapel in the evening, there was to be no afternoon school. But before I get to the afternoon, I must just say how very attentive they were again in the morning, and how filled they all seem to be with the noble spirit of Paul. They want to read in the Bible in the afternoon as well as morning, and so they shall. It is a joy I have dreamed

of, but scarcely ever thought to realise, that this Book should be to them more full of interest and life than all others. God grant that this good feeling may ever live in their hearts! Oh, if the seed once takes root there, how glorious will be the harvest! But the afternoon was very delightful,—a clear, bright summer sky, a summer sun, and a soft fresh breeze; and Henry Crosskey and five of the boys and myself, must go and spend the afternoon in the fields, among the woods and the flowers and the brooks and the pure air and the very heaven, for we seemed to be in the midst of it: it hardly felt a far-off thing. Oh, it was a delightful walk, indeed; such a merry, happy, good-natured, kind-hearted party never was: everybody was trying to make everybody happy!"

In the summer of 1843, he was with the Mellys of Liverpool,—George and Charles Melly, names since well known in connection with drinking fountains, public playgrounds, and other good works,—as tutor, spending his college vacation with them at the Lakes. Mingled with his description of a pleasant, rambling country life for a few months, we come upon a couple of passages in his letters, about Wordsworth.

"*July* 10*th*, 1843, *Ambleside.*

"Charles and I went to Rydal Church. We were sorry to go in there late, but still we went in: I fear the thought of seeing Wordsworth was rather uppermost. The church, unfortunately, is being 'done up,' and all looks far too new and nice; but it is very pretty, and prettily situated. We went in, and there was the face which no one could mistake. The silver hair, the large noble forehead, the dreamy eye. One thing disappointed me,—an impatient, irritable look: they say that it is his disposition. I did not speak to him, for I did not know whether he would like it then; but it is a privilege to have seen him."

And then, next day:—

"Whom should we meet in the road but Mr. Wordsworth and

his wife, and a youngish man and woman, probably his son and daughter, riding out to enjoy the evening beauties. He was dressed in his old, broad-brimmed carter's white hat. I stopped the car, and told him my name. He said, 'Oh! the son of the clergyman.' I said, 'Yes;' and asked him whether he had any objection to our seeing his garden. 'Oh no, none at all, either to-night, or any other time: we had better go to-night, for it was a very favourable time.' The young lady asked after Amelia, and then he made further enquiries; and then, after this pleasant little interview, we said good-bye."

Afterwards, he returned, with the Mellys, for a little while, to Liverpool, where he met with Father Matthew, ever after a warm friend, and under whose influence he joined the Temperance movement, throwing himself into it with the same ardour which characterised him in everything, and to the end of his life steadily supporting the cause. By and by came the time when, in common with the other students, he had to go out occasionally on Sundays to preach, for the most part in the various little village chapels which abound within twenty or thirty miles of Manchester. Those to which he most loved to go were in Rossendale. There, was a group of congregations, almost entirely composed of humble working-people who some years before had left some of the off-shoot sects of Wesleyanism, and formed themselves into independent churches, still retaining their old Methodist warmth and freedom and close earnest fellowship, while gradually coming unconsciously—unaware of there being any other churches that held such views as theirs—to tenets which at last brought them into alliance with the Unitarians. Among these people,

with their hearty country life, their earnest, praying ways, their love of vigorous, unconventional, extempore preaching, their capacity for being wrought up into fervour and enthusiasm, Travers found himself more at home than in the ordinary type of Unitarian congregations. These latter, coming to the same theological stand-point from a very different direction, had received their character from the staid, quiet, formal, scholarly Dissent, which grew up in the old Presbyterian connexion after the passing of the Toleration Act had deprived the old Nonconformity of the stimulus of persecution. They have many a pleasant memory in those little Rossendale villages, where "the lads from college" were entertained—and criticised—in a like homely, unsparing, and substantial way,—of the days when Travers used to come to them; of what a lad he looked in his round jacket and cap; and yet how there was "none of the lot could preach and pray like him;" and of his long walks upon the hills, and the prayer-meetings he led; and of his loving, kindly, earnest speech. A pleasant account of a day among them is given in the following letter:

"On Sunday I went to school (at Rawtenstall) in the morning. One of the congregation, who preaches sometimes, opened school, and in his prayer he referred to me, and said, 'Be Thou a present help to him; be Thou mouth and matter to him.' This little prayer I felt very much to strengthen me. Altogether the school, the simple, hearty worshipping, and this earnest prayer, seemed quite to inspire me. The spirit seemed to press on me. They have as many children in the school as can possibly be taught. They have fixed up boards in the front of the pews in the galleries which, being hung on hinges, can be lifted up as

desks to write upon, and when the writing is over, can be let down again. Thus, with little contrivances of this kind, they are able to impart a great deal of instruction to a good many children. It is, however, a very small place,—I think quite the tiniest little chapel I ever was in; but the most room is made of it. It had got about that a stranger was likely to preach; and my father was known by several who had gone to hear him open the Bury chapel some years ago, so that the little chapel was very well filled: I do not think that half-a-dozen more could have found seats. I had thought of my sermon a little that morning, and the night before as I walked from Bury; but though it was a rather hurried preparation, I felt no difficulty in going on. Both in the prayers and in the sermon, I uttered the feelings with which I was filled. There was no check; but the spirit of devotion, which filled the hearts of all, urged me on. We felt, indeed, that God was in the midst of us. After the service, my friends encouraged me, and wished me to preach in the afternoon. I had no difficulty in filling up the time. The difficulty, I found, was when to stop. Of course as I had promised as much to come to Newchurch as to Rawtenstall, I could not give up preaching there in the afternoon: so, after dinner, some half dozen of us walked over. It was about a two miles' walk; and every step the country got more and more beautiful. Newchurch itself is situated in one of the prettiest spots I ever saw; the church at the top of a hill, with trees and cottages about it; and on every side the most beautiful hills rising high above it. I should like to go with you there at Whitsuntide, if you are with us, and can walk a bit. Mr. Ashworth, the village missionary who lives here, was at home, and we went to his house. We passed by the chapel to get to it; and a woman came out of a neighbouring cottage, saying, 'has that young man who was expected at Rawtenstall bin at Rawtenstall this morning?' 'Yes.' 'Will he come here this afternoon?' 'Yes, we suppose so.' It was not wonderful she did not think me a parson, for I was in anything but parsonic dress. However, we had a laugh about it. The chapel at Newchurch is much larger, and there is an organ in it. The gallery goes all round, and all the congregation is in it. The school is below. This is not very pleasant.

One has to look up to the people, and all below looks empty; for, of course, when the children are gathered together, they do not take up very much room. The galleries were very well filled indeed: I suppose there must have been about 300 people from what they said afterwards, and just the same simple-hearted people: they seemed to be all joining heartily in the singing. Some of them, too, I had met at Rawtenstall on the Friday. I had the same ease, freedom, and unconsciousness as in the morning. I was filled with my subject; and I felt soon at home in the midst of fellow-worshippers. I had to give out the enclosed notices, (you will be glad to see—a Sick Society) and also I mentioned a Temperance Meeting to be held at Rawtenstall. We drank tea (Mr. Hargreaves and I) at Mr. Ashworth's, and then returned home, he wanting to get to his cows in good time. As we returned, we called in at old Mrs. Whitehead's. Her sons are Methodists, but she remains a Unitarian. They are very kind to her, and see that she has all that she wants; but she seems to prefer remaining in her old little cottage, to going into one of their larger houses. She is upwards of 85, but remarkably vigorous minded. We talked together for some time, and then, as I thought Mr. Hargreaves said he was in a hurry, I was going. 'What! come to see me, and not a word of prayer?' she said, as though she felt pained at my going thus. This is only an instance of the love of prayer which distinguishes these people. Of course we were glad enough to remain; and after prayer, she talked to me a little about preaching, and especially advised me to go on extempore. 'But we must be filled with the spirit of God,' she said; and so she went on. Then she said, 'Here I am, all alone, except that book; and while I have that, I shall never feel alone. A neighbour comes in and puts my things to rights, for I am not strong enough now to do this. Some say that old people must be nervous; but any one who reads that book—and *loves* it—will be none nervous.' The 'good auld mistress,' as they call her in the village, thought I might remember her, when I am old, talking to me; and so I am sure I shall. After leaving her, I went to Lawrence Taylor's, and the prayer meeting was then going on. Such a happy family they all were, some twenty men and women in the little cottage, and the sick

boy in his bed. It was then, when I was saying how happy it was to meet thus, that Lawrence Taylor said that they are always as they were then,—always as glad to get together as if they had not seen each other for seven years. There was a young woman, a teacher, who had been kept away from school by illness; a good many of us went to see her. She had not been out of doors for a fortnight; and she was very glad to see us. We chatted together for some time, of course unable to sit down, for there were only one or two chairs. Before we left, they wished me again to pray, and one other young man prayed after me, and then we left; and as we returned to Mr. Hargreaves', one after another of our party dropped off. Many a hearty farewell there was after our happy day."

There was another class of congregations, too, in which he was an especially welcome visitor, and where he also found himself thoroughly at home. These were the little churches of "Christian Brethren," as they preferred to call themselves, not identifying themselves with any sect, gathered together here and there, especially in the manufacturing villages of Lancashire and Cheshire, and the Potteries. Among these congregations Travers was a welcome visitor, as among the Rossendale villagers. He found here the same warm, vigorous, unconventional religious life, amidst which his soul always seemed to breathe most freely; and here, too, he began to feel growing strongly upon him that repugnance to the "hired ministry," as it was called among these little flocks, which, though in later years much modified, was by and by to determine the course of his future life.

Amid such occupations and interests his college years passed quickly away. In this outward life, with

its happy, loving enthusiasm for self-denial, was growing up a soul of singular purity and an intense power of realizing spiritual impressions and imparting them to others. Already, even so young as he was, the deepest interest of his life was passing from the realm of outward incidents and circumstances to that of spiritual conflict and experience. The occupations and interests which fill the minds of most young men of twenty-one or twenty-two, had simply no attraction for him; in so far as they did occasionally win his attention, he seems to have felt a lurking sense of self-reproof as for time and interest subtracted from life's worthiest thoughts. From his first entrance on college life, as we have seen, he had set himself against all the usual excitements of study, and if he acquitted himself with any special credit he began to mistrust his motives, and to doubt whether he was not imperceptibly becoming entangled in the snare of love of fame. This was not, indeed, a healthy state of mind. It was the beginning of a morbid tendency to self-introspection, which afterwards, if it was one condition of his strange intensity of spiritual insight and influence, was also at times a source of awful sorrow and depression. His letters—long and frequent to the one dearest friend, who was now like mother and sister to him—are more and more occupied with the outpourings of his soul. Now breaking out into glorying language of trust and holy joy; now filled with sorrowful self-reproaches, indescribably touching to any one who remembers how pure and good he was felt to be by all who knew him; now speaking of deep

spiritual experiences, such as could only be imparted in the closest and tenderest intimacy; now asking advice in mental and spiritual difficulties, with a longing for some other soul to lean upon, strangely contrasting with his vehement self-reliance in all decisions of the outward life,—they form a kind of journal from which it is difficult to extract, and yet apart from which it is almost hopeless to attempt to make the man a living personality to those who did not know him. He seems to have been himself conscious of the danger of this tendency to almost morbid introspection, writing thus of it in January, 1844:—"I am sure it is not a good and simple, wholesome and purifying thing, to think about oneself. It is not what a child would do." But, alone in lodgings, it was easier to say this than to act upon it.

Yet it must not be gathered from what has been said, that the prevailing tone of his religious life was sad or morbid. Far from it. Not yet had the darker shadows, by which in after years his faith was at times partially eclipsed, begun to gather about his soul; while his intensity of spiritual consciousness, his habitual life in presence of religious realities, and his strong joy in them, gave a light to his eye, and a tremulous gladness to his tone which struck all who listened to his preaching, or who shared the converse of his happier hours. Even those elements in religious faith, such as the thought of the heavenly world, which usually are the last to become living realities to the soul, needing the sterner experiences of fuller life to drive them home, were already strong and happy

thoughts to him. Note how he writes to the same friend who was daily watching for the end by the bedside of her dying mother:

"Dear——. I wonder what account to-day will bring. Every day now I look to hear that the last has come. Death is looked forward to, and comes, as sweetly as sleep. It is sad to think what gloomy ideas have got possession of us, and how hard it is to get rid of them,—how death and sickness, and pain, always continue to have some association with evil in our minds;—and yet I do not know; as friend after friend departs, I think we let this vanish, and have the joy there is in sorrow, the life there is in death. Death will come and put an end to cares and anxieties and hopes delayed and disease and pain; and it will open a fresh source of happiness which life cannot give us. Angels have an omnipresence one cannot ascribe to men. Their spirits seem to attend one always. One may live in closest communion with them; and as we travel on our way to the grave, we seem already to be gathering around us those spirits, (and to be conversing with them too) whom we shall find in heaven. The solitary hours of an old man must be full of this pleasant intercourse. There is no more constant thought with me, I think, than this communion with the spirit of my dear mother. Oh, how I love to think of her, and how I love to feel that she is with me. I never felt less without her than I do now. That dear good mother, so full of love, and kindness, and gentleness; so cheerful in the midst of cares, so self-forgetful! She always seemed to live for others, and always to enter into the heart of others. Such a patient and attentive nurse; so anxious always to seek out sorrow and distress, that she might help to remove it. What a thousand memories come to my mind, of little things she did; and what a thousand things passed by unnoticed by me in my infancy! What joy like this, to think of the good and dead, the saint-like hearts that now are with angels round the throne of God!"

NORWICH: 1845–1847.

WITH the year 1845, the sterner experiences of life began for him. It opens with the echo of bitter, disappointed letters from home and friends, at his announcement of an unconquerable aversion to entering the ministry. The whole tone of his thought and feeling had for some time been tending in this direction. His experiences among the homely little congregations in Rossendale, and among the Christian Brethren who maintained a strong testimony against what they called the "hired ministry," had increased his natural repugnance to associating pecuniary remuneration with such a sacred work as preaching.

"Now please answer me this question," he writes to his usual referee in all his cases of conscience. "Should you like to be paid for teaching in the Sunday school? Should you like to be paid for visiting in your district? If not, do you not think it is rational for me to object to being paid for visiting—to object to being paid for praying, and for exhorting my fellow-creatures that we may join together in breathing in the spirit, and following the example of Jesus Christ? Is it irrational for me to feel different when I go to Rawtenstall, and when I go to Oldham where I get ten shillings?"

With his vehement self-opinionativeness, which was always the stronger because of its association with what he felt to be moral principles, it is not difficult to understand how these thoughts grew upon him, till at length,

about the end of 1844, he definitely resolved that he must choose some other mode of life. To his father this was, as might be expected, a very bitter and heavy disappointment. He had borne with what he thought the eccentricities of his son hitherto, recognising the noble nature underneath these things, though perhaps no one understood how they were the very outcome of that noble nature. But through all his persistency in refusing to take a degree, and his unwillingness to compete for college honours and examinations, Mr. Madge had looked forward to his son's ultimate settlement in the ministry with strong hope and high expectation, as to a time when he would sober down, and his strong religiousness of character would win him a high place and be greatly instrumental for good. Now, however, all these natural hopes were dashed to the ground; and his son proclaimed his intention of entering upon a trade. He inclined to that of a printer. "There would be no better discipline for me than a year or two's restraint of a trade."

"I cannot help feeling that I had better take the course I am taking, entering upon a trade, learning, gaining more experience, keeping my thoughts still upon this subject, having my views overthrown or confirmed, as the case may be, by experience, and then with the education, both for a printer and a minister, I may make the choice *which* shall be my business, and the free work of my leisure hours. Do you not think that the wisest and most prudent plan?—It will be good for me to earn my own way, and go through the *ordinary* lot of man."

From these discussions, and the painful tension of mind and heart which they created in spite of his own undoubting conviction that he was deciding

rightly, his attention was called away by a still greater trouble. He was summoned to London in haste, to see his sister Amelia once again before she died. For some years she had been declining in health, and had spent the last summer in Madeira, but without result; and now, during the bitter months of the winter and early spring, she had been rapidly wearing away in consumption. Between her and Travers there had always been the very tenderest affection, and he longed to see her again. It was not to be, however,—she had died a few hours before he reached town. "But oh! so beautiful she is in death!" he writes; and the hurried note, blotted with tears, ends, "Thank God for everything!"

The approaching conclusion of his college course finds him still undecided what to do. That he cannot at present enter the ministry is the only thing clear to him; for the rest he is in doubt. The plan that he most inclines to, as far as feeling is concerned, is to settle down at Norwich for a while. This "Norwich home" has been already alluded to. With some friends there, Mr. and Mrs. Dowson, who had known and loved him as a child, and to whom, in losing his mother, he had been still more closely drawn, he had already passed many a happy time, and had indeed come to look upon their house as a very dear home. Having no family themselves, they loved the earnest, enthusiastic youth as if he had been their own son; and now that his future seemed overcast and unsettled, they wished him to go and take up his abode with them. Nothing could be more delightful to him; but

with his usual distrust of any way that seemed the happiest, he felt as if the pointing of Providence were rather towards an opening that presented itself in another direction, in the neighbourhood of Leeds, where he could pursue his idea of being a printer, and at the same time would find ample scope for his ardent desire to do good among the poor. A long letter which we find at this time, written about three weeks before leaving college, gives a better insight than any description can do at once into the beautiful unselfishness of his spirit, and into the ferment of thought which was impelling him hitherward and thitherward:—

"*Manchester, May 31st*, 1845.

"Your letters lead me to do what I have hardly time for at present, but what I really cannot help doing (write a long letter, I mean). Oh, my dearest ones, my heart almost breaks at the thought that we cannot live together. God has made us of one heart, therefore should we cleave one to another. And I am sure I do not know why it should not be so in time.—But as I said before, I really know nothing about myself. I never was so full of doubts and misgivings as to what is my duty; I never felt so doubtful as to what was to be my great business in life, or rather, the *mode* of carrying out that business, as at the present moment; and yet, with all the doubts that are crowding on my mind, I seem to be standing firmer and firmer on the principles which by degrees I gain. There is one principle which I am disposed to carry out more than I have ever done. I mean that of loving one's neighbour as oneself, and doing all things to the glory of God. This is a subject which has been constantly on my mind for some time past—and I think no earthly thoughts at all, no restraints of society, no wishes of friends ought to prevent one at all from carrying out these principles, which are the very heart of Christianity, to their fullest extent. The greatest

part of the applications of the principle can be carried out without violating the feelings of any. But a great part still remains, especially as regards the use of money, partly as regards the use of time, in which if the one spirit rules, and the one object is ever kept in view, one cannot but run counter to worldly ways, and to all whom worldly ways keep bound. I sometimes think that when I go to Leeds, I shall be almost wholly devoted to the subject of Sunday School Education. I should like to see good schools springing up all around ;—where children should not be taught to consider a hundred things essential to salvation, which have nothing to do with it, and the one thing needful almost passed by—but where love should be religion, and religion love ; and where, too, a more extensive education of the mind should be carried out than is the case with any but the Unitarian schools. We ought all to think, and all to act for ourselves. No one can think or act for us ; the whole weight lies on our own shoulders. There is not one of us who is not bound to devote himself wholly to Christ. Oh ! it is delightful to think the world is full of goodness, and I believe it too. At least it would be full, or, if you like it better, it would be much more full if only custom could be set at nought, and children taught the whole of what God requires from us. It grieves me to see the amount of idle time —of time wasted in mere amusement—of money too—of health too—all in amusements and luxuries;—whilst brothers are by our side, weeping and wailing and gnashing their teeth. I sometimes feel ready to sit down and cry—I sometimes cannot help it—when my heart wanders from home to home, to different scenes of wretchedness, brutality and sin ; and yet here we Christians are, sitting at our ease, and doing nothing. Ah ! but we are doing something, you say; and so we are—thank God we are—but the wonder is with me that we ever stop doing, and that thousands who do *something*, do so very little. I do not want to find fault, dearest —— . This grumbling and sitting down crying is all of no use;—it is the very sin itself, to spend our time and waste our hearts and spirits thus. But do not let us shut our eyes to the sin. If we Christians had been all doing our duty, then we might have found fault with Christianity, or with the nature of man, on which Christianity has to work. But both are perfect.

The glories of the one are continually being revealed—the slumbering energies of the other are being brought forth. It is we who sin—oh, let us see the sin,—let us turn from the sin and *live*. Let us *live* while we live. I am rather surprised you think so well of the world; I mean, are so satisfied with its present state. But it is a happiness which perhaps it is kinder of you to try to give me, than of me to try to rob you of. * * * And how can the world be made happier, but by our all working, working, working harder than we have ever dreamt of. My idea is for a few, who feel this strongly, to unite simply and naturally, and be constantly together, cheering, and encouraging and helping one another on. As the most natural thing in the world, they will bear one another's burdens; they will talk together, pray together, plan and work together. This is what brings you all and keeps you together to a certain extent. I cannot but hope that it will be carried out more and more perfectly, and be an ever-stronger bond of union. But you have only *begun* to work abroad (except indeed in the school). Now this should be the great object of union, and I see no reason at all, why here should not be the seed of a constantly spreading good. Only this wants constant urging. Let us devote ourselves *entirely* to God,—not to amusement, idleness, or pleasure seeking; not to large houses, fine food or fine clothes, in all of which things, perhaps, we most of us err, but to being and doing good. I do not see a bound to the good that might be done, and the greatness of the work which might be achieved, if it were carried out in this spirit.

"About myself I really cannot tell you much. I have such a number of doubts upon my mind, that I could not have entered upon 'the ministry' had I been so inclined. That I shall be always working with my hands, I think very doubtful,—I may be, for I think nothing but good of it. Long hours, indeed, are very bad, or else I should as soon be in one trade as another, provided the trade were a useful one. No one is too good for a useful trade. It is sure to be useful to *him*. Only, six hours a day is long enough. There is a great deal too much labour in the world. Were we all Christians, we should not want people to work more than six hours a day. There would not be the work

to be done. But then it would be a great deal better paid. This state of things may be gradually approaching. The kingdom of heaven always can be approached by degrees. But the degrees are of this kind : first one man comes into it, then another, then another, and so on. It is not that first a plan partly Christian is proposed, then another rather more so, and so on. The absurdity, I think, of the last way is shown in your 'Brotherly Society.' There is no way of stepping by degrees from the present Society to the perfect one we have in view. It is more difficult for the Brotherly Society to become a Christian Society, with no mixture of selfishness and worldliness (not of imperfections merely) than for a Christian society to be formed according to the first plan, first by one and then by another determining to labour together, meeting together because they love one another, and are of one heart, devoting all they have to the good of others, and trusting to God to permit them to help one another whenever there is need of help. It seems to me that we are bound to devote ourselves entirely to the propagation of the highest good which Christianity encourages, and encourages *practically*, too, by shewing it us in practice. Each man should love his neighbour as himself, and not save up his money at all whilst there is a neighbour starving, but trust in God to supply his wants if ever he be in need. If, with a doubting spirit, he asks, 'How will God supply my wants?' we can say 'in many ways; but one way seems this: if you thus resolve, you will find men of kindred hearts with yourself; they will be your friends, and most likely God will make it their greatest joy to help you. If the time comes when you cannot help yourself, and God does not put it into the heart of any to help you, then it is evident He is about to take you to Himself.' I meant this merely as an example.

"In looking forward to my own future, I often think I may have some field of usefulness open to me—some direct work to be done, so great as to demand one's whole life, and which will prevent the practicability of my working at a trade because of its requiring constant locomotion. If so, I should feel bound to live just like one of the apostles, very thankful if any one took me in, and not minding if nobody did :—thankful to receive anything from a friend, but not spending more over oneself than

absolutely necessary. This *may be*, but I cannot tell. My objection is not to this kind of support (hire or remuneration you may call it, though I think it is spiritually different), but to the settled location and duties of a minister. I think a congregation is likely to do more good without one than with. I am glad to support myself in a trade, partly because I am so doubtful what to do, and do not see my way very clear. It is a resting point. Perhaps for months or years, I must look backwards and forwards, and meditate on what has to be done, and on the best way to do it. I was surprised to find, the other day, that Wesley did not leave college, where he was a Fellow, till 32. Others have been long in meditation; and what earnest thought must long have filled the mind of Christ! I want to know more of people. I do not feel that we ought to be shut up in a sect, and yet I know few except you at Norwich, and those at Rawtenstall, Padiham, and Newchurch, who seem to me to have got hold of the right thing. Among some Baptists here there seems to be something of the same kind, and I dare say there is a great deal more within the sects; and those whose hearts cling to such things, are just the ones never to leave them. In the midst of all these doubts and perplexities, I long for nothing so much as time to fit myself for future work, to see what that work is, and how it must be done."

The plan of going to Leeds fell through, and when, a few weeks later, the college session closed, and with it the preparation period of Travers's life, Norwich was his destination. During the few weeks' interval, however, he had a short run through Wales; the excitement and anxiety of the last few months having nearly knocked him up, a few glorious days among the mountains cooling his fevered spirit. "It has breathed such health and life into me," he writes, "and oh, the worlds and worlds of glorious beauty that I have seen!" It was in the course of this week's wandering

among the mountains that there occurred a little incident, which I remember his speaking of in a very simple and touching way in one of his sermons a year or two later, as an illustration, from experience, of the strengthening and steadying influence of trust in God.

"*July* 10 *or* 11, 1845.

"I had intended to come down from Snowdon to Beddgelert, but I was advised to come down a very steep and pathless descent to Llyn Gwynnant. If you have a good map of Wales, you will see a little stream running down from Snowdon to Llyn Gwynnant, a small lake lying on the road from Capel Curig to Beddgelert. This stream does not begin till somewhat near the foot of the mountain. The difficulty was to get to it. The guide took me a little bit of the way down, and seeing that I understood how to descend, not straight but zig-zag, jumping from rock to rock, soon left me. I went down very safely for some time, but gradually it got more and more difficult. At one time there was loose, shaly earth; at another, nothing but rolling stones to rest upon, which gave way whenever I put my foot upon them; but the worst were huge rocks, which hung over so as to make precipices, down which I looked to the valley below me; and at last I felt quite overpowered. I do not know how it was that I could lose my presence of mind, for it does no good; but I looked above, and there was a wall of rock, which I had climbed down, but could not ascend. I looked below, but there was nothing but the immense depth, and the prospect of other difficulties, and I was but on a little ledge of rock, with all above and below to inspire fear. For a minute or two I was quite dizzy, and thought I must be lost, but happier thoughts soon visited me, and even there I was not without help. Thus, but a little atom of a child as I was, clambering among the mighty rocks and mountains, I felt that a Father's love still protected me, and a Father's hand would guide me. Such a glow of faith seemed to burst upon my soul as I had never felt before. I felt as though the mountains themselves might melt to nothing, before

I could perish without His will. He found me a way out of my difficulties. My only chance was to make some jumps sideways, to rocks a little below, and trust that I might not fall over.

"By degrees I overcame the worst part, and then sat down with a sort of worn-out, yet most thankful feeling, to rest for a little time, and bathe my feet in the stream, which here was just beginning."

The situation was in reality much more perilous than he liked to admit in the letter to his friends from which the foregoing extract is taken; the narrow ledge which afforded the only escape being eight or nine feet below, and to one side. One is reminded of a saying of Tytler's, the historian, when he in like manner had escaped from a great peril by this same steadying of his soul by faith:—"What people call *presence of mind* is truly nothing else than the *presence of God*."

The beginning of August found Travers in Norwich, with his new life fairly begun. His ideas of manual labour or trade had come to nothing, and his plan was to support himself by opening a day school for boys, at Mr. Dowson's, giving his leisure time to the work of the ministry. It would be hard, indeed, to those who know the spirit of his whole intercourse with the boys in that little school, and the impression for good he left in their hearts, to say that there could be any truer "ministry" than that he unconsciously was working among them day by day; but that was not enough to satisfy him. A year or two before, when, with the promise that he shewed, he might have looked on almost any career in the ministry as open to him, he

had written "I am going to be a Town Missionary, I hope;" and now it was in this direction that his spontaneous ministry turned. He opened a room in one of the worst parts of Norwich, as the centre of a little missionary work of his own. There he gathered a Sunday school together, and held a homely service every Sunday evening for the poor of the neighbourhood; spending his leisure hours in distributing tracts, and in visiting in the poor neglected homes of the district. He also visited and preached in a district outside of Norwich, in connection with one of like spirit with himself, Mr. Corkran, now a Domestic Missionary in London. It was altogether a very humble, unconspicuous effort, but as fervently apostolic a work as was ever done, and the fruits of it were felt in many a heart. Few have ever been able to interpret in their ministry, in so touching a way, the spirit of the gospel invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And yet, even so early, his tendency to morbid introspection, combined with a naturally feeble constitution, and now and then deepening into periods of sad despondency, at times paralysed his energy and brought him to the verge of breaking up his work. He continued at Norwich, however, through 1846 and 1847, varying his work by a visit to the Staffordshire Potteries, where he preached for some time in the school vacation of the latter year; and then, by the advice of his closest friends, who felt it might be better for him to be thrown more completely upon himself, he breaks away from his Norwich home, first for a

brief preaching tour in Cornwall, and then to begin life anew in Manchester.

"I go forth," he writes, "as a new creature. Now I feel that there has been no disappointment in the past, but all a thankful teaching and experience. Two years ago all seemed dark before me. I thought nothing could ever remove the gloom. We might plod on and do our best, and patiently submit. But now all is bright to look forward to. Yes, and all bright to look back upon. Dear home! without the lessons it has had to teach, without its sorrows and its comforts, how could it ever have been so dear and sacred as in memory it will now be for ever?"

CORNWALL: January to March, 1848.

THE excitement among some of the branches of the great growth of Methodism, which during the previous years had led to controversies and secessions, and the origination in some of the busier parts of the Potteries and factory districts of little bands meeting together for worship under the name of Christian Brethren, had not been unfelt even in the remote districts of Cornwall. The stronghold of Methodism, however,—a simple and hardy race, to whom John Wesley's influence had been civilization as well as salvation, the fishermen of Mount's Bay and St. Ives, and the miners of Redruth and Helstone, were not a very receptive soil for the seeds of intellectual doubt, and there was probably hardly a populous district in the whole country in which the old faith was still held so undoubtingly, and in so much of the fervent simplicity of early Methodism. At Penzance, however, was a little group of working men who, finding themselves unable to hold with any of the churches about, banded together to try and form a little congregation on what they thought a basis of freer thought, clubbing together to procure books, and holding some humble kind of church-meeting among themselves in a little upper room. At Falmouth also was another little flock, not much larger, though numbering among them some of

a different class, one or two well-to-do tradespeople, and old Lieutenant Boase, the barrack-master at Pendennis Castle. There, too, the services had been conducted among themselves in a humble room, it being impossible to maintain a minister.

It was to these two places, at the beginning of 1848, that our friend was asked to go on a sort of tentative mission, by the Western Christian Union, an association of congregations in some of the neighbouring counties. It was a new work to him, and among a strange people, but the very strangeness of it was not without a charm for him, and he commenced his work with the happy, hopeful spirit, which with him was so characteristic of every beginning. Taking up his lodging at Penzance, he employs himself in making acquaintance with the two or three who were interested in his coming; in forming plans for his few months' work, and in wanderings to neighbouring towns to see if there was any opening for lecturing or services,—varied by periodical visits to Falmouth.

It is, however, a hard trial to him at times. After living with his close and dear friends at Norwich, it is very trying to him to be left so utterly alone. "To go out, and have no one with whom to go; to come back, and find no dear face to welcome me;—Oh! it is a hard struggle between the conscience and the heart." Occasionally, however, a friend breaks in upon his solitude. Now it is old Mr. Hounsell, of Bridport:—

"—— a good, kind-hearted man, who comes this way two or three times a year, and visits the little fishing-towns and villages, on business. He is a net manufacturer. When at home, he

teaches in their Sunday school, and when he comes this way he brings a number of tracts and books with him. He seems to mix up this sort of work with his business, and to do much among the fishermen."

Now, again, there drops in upon him "an old school-fellow who happened to be passing through Penzance on business, and whom I have not seen since I left Mr. Malleson's." Another time—one Saturday—"a gentleman holding an official position in the district," makes a descent upon him, with a patronising *empressement* which fills Travers with a half-amused bewilderment. Next day he will have Travers to breakfast and dine with him at his hotel;—"astonished me by asking me what I would have for dinner? 'Some whiting, couple of fowls, and bacon?' It seemed dreadfully unlike Sunday!" "Rather a grand sort of gentleman," he adds a few lines further, "rides everywhere in his carriage,—talks very big,—corresponds with Lord John, &c. However, he seems a good sort of man, and takes a great interest in these congregations." In that remote exile, indeed, any friendly voice was welcome. Even luxurious grandees, tempting him to what would seem to him such "riotous living," for Sunday, were a relief from solitude; and he sums up, very characteristically:—

"It really is very pleasant to meet with these kind-hearted people in any shape, taking pity on my solitude, and a deep interest in the work. But still that good, plain, unpretending Mr. Hounsell is more in my way."

More interesting to us, however, are the glimpses of his work which we get here and there from his letters. Before he has been there a week, he is gathering

together all whom he can for a Bible class. He writes, January 5th :—

"In the evening we had the first meeting of our Bible class. Eight of us there were, a small beginning, but those that came were so much interested that I think we are likely to increase in numbers. One young man of the name of Colenzo could not receive the orthodox notions, and was becoming an infidel, he says. He finds with us what he wants. He seems, which I did not expect, really earnest and devout. I have been much pleased with what I have seen of him. Another man of the name of Vingoe has some strange notions, and seems all for discussion. Two queer, rough-looking men were there. There is one boy comes, who used to have bad companions, and live in a bad way altogether. He has been very unhappy about his wrong doings, and now is quite changed, and attends all the services most regularly. You see there are some few encouragements, but a great deal to make the whole thing doubtful. To-morrow I go to Falmouth."

Rather a theological fatality in that name Colenzo, it would seem;—not an uncommon name, by the way, in this Cornish district, where the names have mostly a quaint foreign savour. This Bible class is only one part of his work; he starts a Sunday school, finding, however, very few able to help, and, in another part of Penzance, a cottage prayer meeting. A few days later, January 8th, he writes,—not very hopefully :—

"*Penzance, Jan. 8th,* 1828.

"This week's work is done. On the whole it has been as satisfactory, as far as my 'business' is concerned I mean, not myself, as perhaps I had any right to expect. I had not fully realized the fact of there being no congregation, but merely a few unconnected listeners. It is only a few months since they began to meet at all. That time has been chiefly devoted to lectures and discussions, and now is the time to establish the work—to

organise the society—to start schools, and meetings, and institutions of different kinds—with what success it is not possible yet to tell. I have been spending the whole of this afternoon with Mr. Peace, partly because I find that I was not made to be alone, and partly because I wanted to form with him some definite idea of our future proceedings. I am afraid I have but little of the spirit which would lead to a forty days' retirement in the wilderness. To be alone the whole day long, with nothing to do but read and write, almost drives me out of my senses at times. Now and then I feel as if I must go and work the pump at the corner for all the people that come with their pails and pitchers, or go and break stones upon the road, or do something else that is healthy and invigorating. However, this afternoon with Mr. Peace, and this evening with you, quite set me up. Then I have six more letters to write at my first spare time, and my sermons to think about; so that I am not idle. The first thing I do every morning is to read one of Mr. Martineau's sermons. The next thing is to look out for some dear words from home."

About Falmouth,—whither (January 5th,) "I go to-morrow,"—he thus writes, in the same letter:—

"I was not expected at Falmouth, I found. However, they sent round to the various members of the congregation, and about twenty or thirty came together. They meet in a small room neatly fitted up, and appear to be a very united little flock. They are generally well-to-do sort of people here, and are an old-established set, very quiet—doing nothing, but meeting happily enough from Sunday to Sunday. A kind old man, with a kind old wife, and two simple-hearted, pleasant daughters, took me into his house. In the evening we had family worship, he said they always had,—you know the blessing that this is in a strange land. What a wonderful and happy change it makes. I cannot imagine a *home* without it. But this seemed the perfect fulfilment of what every working man's home may be."

The mention of this home, in which he usually stayed when at Falmouth, is the more impressed upon my mind by the fact, that among several letters which

I received on making known my intention to prepare this little Memoir, is one from this very man, old John Blew, of whom, so long ago, Travers wrote thus affectionately. Now, nineteen years later, a veteran of 83, in slow, tremulous writing, he sends me his loving recollections of the "endearing young man" who "sojourned at my house" (at intervals) "during three months;" gossipping pleasantly of "how careless he was of himself;"—"quite indifferent to the weather, whatever it might be it would not prevent him from fulfilling his engagements;" about which, being duly remonstrated with, "he would only make a laugh at it;"—not much sobered in this respect since the days when he wrote "I must *positively* refuse the flannel waistcoats."

Travers worked very hard during those three months, but it was a thankless work. The Penzance people had never known any quiet congregational life under any one strong enough to lead them; and, being constantly attacked by their neighbours and fellow-workmen, had grown into confirmed lovers of controversy. So, in spite of an occasional token of hopefulness in his letters,—such as "More are coming to the school, some even married men," with rejoicing expressions about the prayer meeting,—he felt little drawn to remain longer than the brief three months for which he had at first agreed. His strongest attachments were at Falmouth. Here were several people after his own heart, good old Mr. Boase especially, the leader of the little flock, a venerable white-haired man, whose military undress and upright soldierly bearing only added to the effect of the simple-hearted devotion

with which he read the service Sunday after Sunday. The account which Travers gives of his parting from them all at Falmouth speaks for itself :—

"*Penzance, March 25th,* 1848.

"We had a most delightful, happy meeting last night—not very large, though rather larger than we expected, but just what a meeting of the kind ought to be, sociable, brotherly, and with the spirit of God resting upon all—an echo or reflection of our own dearest and happiest meetings at home.

"There were fifty-four present at tea—some came in afterwards—and about sixty scholars, so that the room was then as full as it could be. All round were hung Mr. Odgers's pictures of Palestine, painted by Miss Johns, a sister of Mr. Johns of Liverpool, and looking very nice, especially by candle-light. Some evergreens, too, were hung about the room, from Mr. Boase's garden, at Pendennis. And tables had been made most comfortably, but with a good deal of trouble, by the Johnses. Most heartily did that good family work on this occasion, but so they have throughout. One of the best things in the evening was the grateful and affectionate manner in which 'the old man,' as he is called, was referred to. Whilst he was alive, these sons kept back very much, and people thought that no good would come out of them. But as he grew old, they began to fill his place, and when he died the mantle seemed to fall upon them.

"He and good old Mr. P, and one or two more, left the Methodists in their younger years. Amongst them was Mr. Odgers's father. And all were repeatedly alluded to in the same spirit. Everybody's heart seemed warmed, and it almost felt as if in spirit these good old men were with us last night. Indeed, Mr. P. did write a letter to Mr. Boase, with kind wishes to all who might be there. It was a very nice letter, and when Mr. Boase had read it to the people, he added a few beautiful words of his own. His heart beat, and his voice faltered as he spoke, for, like most military men, he says he is a complete coward in this work.

"But there were other things to make his heart beat now.

His interest in the congregation is very great. Indeed it is through his exertions that it has been called out from its private room at the Johnses', and enabled to occupy its present position. The lively interest that he takes in all that is going on in the world, his intelligent mind, his kind and generous spirit, and his manners and conversation, which are those of Dr. Arnold's 'Christian Gentleman,' all make him respected and beloved by everybody. And as he does not keep the truth to himself, he has considerable influence amongst people of every class.

"When I name him, I think of those whom he has influenced, and whom he keeps up to the mark. With some of them I have had very pleasant intercourse, and feel that my time has not been wasted. I should like to tell you about them, but if I go on to tell you about everybody at Falmouth, I do not know where I shall stop. But from what I have told you about Mr. Boase, you can imagine how much he must have rejoiced in such a meeting as last night; as Mr. Blew said, 'we have heard of such meetings elsewhere, but I little thought I should live to see one like this, here.' He succeeded, too, in persuading his old niece, a church lady, to come and take a tray, and his young niece, a quakeress, who needed no persuasion, for she is always ready for anything happy and good,—peace, anti-slavery, cold water, and everything else. She is going to send me some *tracts!* I really do not know how it is that Falmouth is so overflowing with happy remembrances. Rich and poor, old and young, we all seem to love one another."

One more glimpse and we have done with Cornwall, but it is one touchingly characteristic of the man:—

"Never did I love little children as I do now. Their hearts are always open to receive and *give.* Little do they know the blessings that they give, and this is the chief beauty of their gifts. You know we meet in a small school-room at Hayle. The schoolmistress has been much interested in what we have tried to do, and I have lately called upon her in the morning after the lecture, on my way to Falmouth. I have learnt some hymns and other things in my wanderings, so that when I get among a party

of children I have always something to say to them. 'Try again,' 'God is in Heaven,' 'The darkness is over,' &c. The children at Hayle have been delighted, and they have said pieces to me in return. The other day I was in time for their morning reading. It was that chapter in Proverbs about the sluggard, so 'The darkness is over' came in exactly. The youngest little chicks were as quiet as the snow while I said it, and then I opened school with a short prayer. It seemed almost like being back in Norwich again."

Three years after Travers left, it fell to my lot to follow him in a similar missionary effort in the same field, spending a college vacation in preaching and working such work as was possible among these very people. If Travers could have known, as it became my privilege to know, the deep veneration in which he was held among those poor homes in which *he* thought he had done so little; how his appeals, and prayers, and, oftener still, brotherly words spoken in private, were felt by some of those rough men and boys whom he had drawn from bad companions, as their strongest human bond to a better life; and how that brief sojourn of his among them would be cherished for many years after, as a happy gleam of helpful Christian ministry, he would not have felt that missionary tour a failure.

Perhaps the only manifest outward result when he "departed from among them," might have been summed up in those words in which the work of a greater than he—and in a greater city—was told;—"Howbeit certain men clave unto him."

But the outward result is seldom all; never when the ministry is deep and true.

MANCHESTER: 1848–1850.

THE friendships Travers had formed, the work into which his heart had thrown itself, and the whole associations which had gathered around his life some years before in Manchester, especially that part of it connected with the Lower Mosley Street Schools, had left an indelible impression upon his mind, an impression which, through all his subsequent life, kept drawing him back to Manchester again and again. Nor was the impression he had left behind him there less remarkable. I had not myself known Travers in those days, but when, a year and a half after he had left, I became a teacher in the same schools to which his college leisure had been given, I found his name still in every one's mouth; his gentleness and kindness; his winning ways with the younger children; his influence for earnestness and goodness among the teachers; his plans for this and that class,—a constant topic of conversation. His giving up the ministry had been a great grief to every one, and it was often talked over whether there was no means of bringing him back.

Never shall I forget the delight which animated all in the schools, from the youngest children who had known him to the oldest teachers, when, in the spring of 1848, tidings spread from class to class that the difficulties had been overcome, that it had been arranged for him

to return to Manchester, and that in a few weeks he would be with us, to live and labour among us permanently. He was to be a sort of minister at large, in connection with the school, visiting scholars at their homes ("Home-Visitor" was indeed the name of the office that he was invited to fill), looking up absentees, taking a general, though unofficial, headship over all the classes and societies, and employing himself as he felt best for the general good of the schools. Many counted the weeks to his coming, as children do before the holidays. I, and the few others who had not known him, wondered what he could be like to excite such a fervour of attachment.

At last he came, and no words can tell the spirit in which he entered on his work so well as some from the letter he wrote home, the first Sunday evening of his new life;—

Manchester, April 2nd, 1848.

"I have been at the school all the morning. What a glorious sight it is, after our poor struggling attempts, or failures rather, in Cornwall. The Sunday schools have never succeeded there. Here, already, there are a thousand things springing up which require looking after. And over all there is a wonderful hallowing thought, that this is to be the work of my life. I have hardly known what to do with myself when looking forward to this hour, and yet now that it is come it all seems so natural, and just what ought to be, that it leaves one no thought but of peace and happiness."

I think that the shadow even of his outward presence will long linger in the memory of those who knew him as he lived and worked among us in the happy days that followed. An almost boyish figure; with a quaint simplicity of dress, always the same, which would have

passed for eccentricity in most people, but in him always seemed too simply natural for that; and a face of indescribable sweetness and purity, its fresh, wholesome, kindly look, lit up with beautiful gleams of thought and feeling from the soul within. Those varying expressions of his face were something never to be forgotten; now beaming with sympathy and delight in the joy of those about him; now suffused with unspeakable compassion for their sorrows; now kindling into almost the glow of prophecy in hours of strong religious feeling.

Such an one was he when he came among us in the spring of 1848. At once he became the very life of the school. I have never seen anything to compare to the influence he exercised. No teachers' meeting, no school party, no holiday excursion into the country, could be complete without him. Previously there had been a good deal of stiffness and formality among the teachers. The boys' and girls' schools had separate teachers' meetings. The teachers consorted together in cliques, and hardly spoke to one another beyond their own little sets. All this gradually passed away under the influence of his genial, kindly spirit, that knew nothing of rank or class, and insensibly a tone of almost brotherly feeling infused itself among the whole band of workers. There had been, also, too little of the religious spirit in the school, a secular tone pervading the classes and meetings. Gradually this, too, changed, as one and another of the teachers caught something of the kindling spirit of Travers's piety, and of the fervour of his zeal.

In his letters about this time, we catch many pleasant glimpses of the ways in which he set to work to try and improve the tone alike of scholars and teachers. They were ways entirely of his own; some of them, such as no one who had not his perfect simplicity of heart, and his wonderful power of influencing others, would have attempted. The Sunday work usually comprised an early morning "Mutual Improvement Class," from half-past seven to nine; then came school, with a service following for the children, the chapels by which the schools were supported being too far off to be available. In the afternoon, there was school again for longer hours than in the morning; and as to the evening, it was one of Travers's first hopes that he might be able to collect together the elder scholars and their parents for an evening service, as soon as the long summer days should come to an end, with their overwhelming attraction to toil-worn factory lads and lasses to wander off for country walks. Meanwhile he did not let those Sunday evenings lie idle. Each Sunday afternoon, as soon as school was over, he gathered together ten or a dozen of the elder scholars and teachers about him at his lodgings. Sometimes, when the conversation took a specially interesting turn, they spent the evening there, lightening the conversation with a hymn or two, and always closing with such a prayer as we all used to think, in our revering love, none but Travers could have uttered. At other times, especially on fine evenings, he would wander off with them after tea into the fields near, stretching away from the outskirts of the dusty city into the country—

those "Greenheys Fields," so familiar to every dweller on the Hulme side of Manchester, and indeed to every reader of that wonderful photograph of homely Manchester life, "Mary Barton." These walks, allowing the party to break up into smaller groups, enabled him to have some close quiet talk with each in turn, when they would tell him their troubles or difficulties, ask his counsel, unburden all their hearts to him. He often mentions those evenings with great delight in his letters. For instance :—

"*August* 18*th*, 1848.

"Our Sunday evening party was equally successful, even more so than the first. We had some delightful conversation, and, I hope, did something towards wearing down the strangeness between different classes of our teachers. There are about three orders and conditions amongst us, which have little or no commingling. It is one of my objects to overcome this by these meetings. I may have to do more by these parties just now than may be necessary hereafter; but I know of no other plan for producing the union which is our great good at Norwich. When the evening services commence, as they will do on the third Sunday next month, I do not know by what plan I shall bring the parents to know each other. There are some persons who would like to go straight away after the service, and quietly think of what has been said. I think this is your case. I, on the other hand, always feel ready,—I think *especially* ready—to greet and talk with everybody; and certainly in the case of our congregation, consisting of parents scattered all over the town, who will seldom have any other opportunity of meeting, a little friendly talk is very much to be desired. In order to wear down the strangeness between them, must I go the same way about it as I have done with the teachers, and ask the old people, as well as the young? I have no doubt of their perfectly enjoying to come and drink tea with me, between afternoon school and evening service."

That idea of gathering the parents together in something of the same way was not carried out, for the Sundays passed quickly by, and the evening service was commenced. That evening service was one of the most marked features of his Manchester work. His life seemed to culminate in it week by week, and to many more besides himself it was the central hour, the deepest experience of the week. Held in a school room, which, after the presence of four hundred restless spirits all the day, could necessarily be none of the tidiest or most attractive, it was yet largely attended, winning to it not only many of the older scholars and parents, for whom it was especially designed, but many people also of culture and refinement, who found a helpful power in the simple fervour of Travers's preaching such as they had experienced in no other services. I cannot remember that there was anything either of striking originality, or of what could be called eloquence in his sermons; certainly there was never the least shadow of rhetorical attempt. He made no preparation, so far as *words* were concerned, merely spending a few hours in thoroughly imbuing his mind with the line of *thought* he should take, and then, without a note, in a quiet, natural way, as simply as if he were only conversing with a few close friends, but without the least trace of mere colloquialism, he spoke out all that was in his heart. It came to those who heard like the voice of one standing in the consciously realized presence of God, and awoke in us a sense of the reality of spiritual things, such as probably few of us had ever felt before. And, perhaps even more than the

impression of his preaching, will live in our memory the impression of his prayers. In an earlier chapter I alluded to his writing prayers when at college, and he had indeed, a little before this, published a few prayers for family use, of beautiful simplicity and piety; but at this time he had utterly disused all written prayers, and when he stood up to pray, it seemed as if he were pouring out his very inmost soul to God, unconscious of any human presence, though every word breathing the deep feeling of human sympathies. There was nothing of effort in it, no strained intensity as of a soul wrought into exceptional emotion; the very spirit of quiet, holy love, breathed through it all, only ever deepening into tremulous pleading tones, indescribably touching, when he spoke of the sense of sin, and the need of God's help, and prayed for the wandering and the lost. One who was a frequent attendant on these services expressed the deep feeling they awoke in him, in the following lines, which now first see the light, and which will probably be as pleasant a memorial to others as they were to the writer:—

"Oh, when thy holy glances turn above,
Thy spirit soaring into purer air;
That liquid light is not poor human love,
Those thrilling tones are not poor human prayer.
No earth-born zeal of fierce and fleeting glow
Could fill thine eye with that celestial fire;
No changeful aspiration from below
Could wake so tunefully thy spirit's lyre.

Only when God within the spirit sighs,
Could such a radiance light uplifted eyes."

Weaving itself in at once with his intercourse with

the children in the schools, and with the influences which these services exerted, and reacting in still deeper interest in these services, grew up the pastoral work that largely occupied his week-day life. In a letter of February 2nd, 1849, he speaks of this in words which must not be lost. He had been speaking just before of some book he has been reading, and then passes on to the subject of this home-visiting work, of which at first he had felt rather despondent.

"You cannot tell what a delight it is to me to be thus drinking in the thoughts of others, and starting off on fresh journeys myself. It is a long time since I read anything, till just lately, and I have felt the need of it in the long and difficult task it has often been to fix on a subject to preach about. Now, one subject after another suggests itself to my mind, and instead of being overcome by the thoughts I used to have, I have always something good to think about, as I go out or come in. Yet not *always*. I cannot get over it all at once, and now and then I am still sorely tried. But I think I begin to feel a little happier in my real business—I mean my visiting the scholars' homes—I really rejoice again, as I go to the boys at the Workhouse and Infirmary, or to Thomas Hinchly, whom I spoke of in my last letter, I think—whose eye looks quite bright with promise. I have thought it right, at one or two services, to preach about the want of truth in religious conversation, and I think *I* have derived benefit from it—at least I have had much more real, sincere, religious conversation with those I have been amongst lately, than I had before. Perhaps we are beginning to know each other better, and the chain is being forged by degrees, which for many and many a year to come, is to bind us heart and soul together. I bless God for the sickness which brings me to the bedside of these children, and into the presence of their young thoughts—and I begin to form pictures to my mind of what we shall be to each other hereafter: working together, not in the way that most of us are doing now, but in the presence of each

other's minds, bound by the thoughts and prayers and purposes which we have shared together. The father of one of our boys has just lost his wife. He will come to the services now, and thus by degrees will sorrow,—that blessed angel of God,—gradually build for us a home. And yet there is a great deal of idle visiting mixed up with it all—a great many hearts that I never see into—a great number of persons with whom I have no more or better intercourse than with any stray passenger I might speak to by the way. I cannot and will not force religious conversation when it would only be a bore, or is not naturally called forth. It is better for our visiting to remain as it too often is, a mere five minutes' gossip. God himself will give opportunities for something more to grow out of these, and if the change be but slow, it will only be the more in harmony with nature. There are some whom I might have more influence with if I could relieve their wants or sufferings, yet I dare not give money, I hardly ever do—I generally give amiss."

"Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I unto thee," was the text of one of the most beautiful of those Sunday evening sermons of his. It might almost have been the text of his life, so completely did he evince the power of aiding the tried and suffering in ways far better than by any pecuniary help. He was not indeed in the slightest degree insensible to the physical wants and sufferings of those among whom he went, and sometimes keenly desired the power of wealth that he might be able to give effectual relief:—

"I have forgotten to say one thing. One of the nicest people I call upon, is, a young woman who, I fear, is in the first stage of consumption. I think I have mentioned her to you before. She has a beautiful, unselfish temper, and if she dies will be a great loss not only to her home but to the school. She coughs a great deal, and raises phlegm, and last Sunday there was blood. Yet

she is obliged to go every morning, in the dark and cold, to the factory, and in the dark and cold comes home at night. The family are very poor, and she earns 14s. a week. These things must often happen amongst the poor, but the rich know nothing of them. Would that I could say to some rich man, 'Support her through the year; let her come at times, for days and weeks, to your house, and let her be sent in summer to some sea-side place.' But there is no one; and she must be left to kill herself for the sake of weekly bread. I feel this the more because she reminds me often of Amelia, and I think, if such had been her case, what should we have said."

It must not, indeed, be thought that he had no funds at his disposal from which to render help in necessitous cases. Many an one of his wealthier friends was ready enough with a sovereign or a five-pound note, now and then, for his poor's purse, given with a confidence that used to go to his heart; but what he acutely felt was, that much of the deepest suffering among the poor needs a care and help of a kind altogether different from any doles possible from such a source. This he tried, according to his own small opportunities, to supply. Here, for instance, is an illustration of a kind of help too seldom rendered, even by those whose larger homes, further in the country, would enable them to render it more effectually than Travers ever could :—

"*February 23rd*, 1849.

"I have had two lads, who are ill, spending the day with me. They came, one of them especially, from unhealthy homes. They are both orphans : one of them *quite alone*, not a single relative, or anybody who knew anything of him before he came here a year or two since:—a Scotch lad he is, with a very cruel overlooker at the mill, who reminds me of Mr. Covey, in Fred. Douglas. I let them come when they like. They sit and read

in this room, and then we go out and have a little walk, and then a chat in the kitchen, and then a bit of dinner; and they seem very much to enjoy it, while it is little or no interruption to me. The places where they live are not like homes: they are very wretched for sick people. However poor a *home* is, it seems to be all that a sick person wants; but *lodgings*, with noisy children, and cleaning, and cooking, and many other lodgers perhaps, are enough to kill sick people."

It is not difficult to understand how a work taken up in such a spirit would keep increasing on his hands. By and by he gets his best helpers among the teachers to begin house to house visitation, in the very poor district close about the schools, with cottage temperance meetings, and services here and there. Here is a sketch of one of his busy Sundays :—

"Last Sunday night, that is yesterday week, our teetotal society visited a room in a very bad part of the town, and a very good meeting we had. Our young men spoke very well, considering their little previous practice, and the room was full to overflowing. I hope I shall soon be able to give you some account of our visitings in our own neighbourhood. I really was quite tired out that Sunday night, for I had presided at a tea-party the night before at Hurst, a village near Ashton-under-Lyne, walked home, where I arrived about half-past one; got up early the next morning to walk to Oldham, eight or nine miles off, in time for morning school; saw the Unitarian Sunday School, the Christian Brethren Sunday School, several teachers of three schools which have been excluded from the church on account of teaching writing; preached twice at Oldham; then again in the evening at Mosley Street, and last of all finished up with the Teetotal Meeting I have spoken about. Yesterday I felt glad to be quiet after the evening service, and even N. D. seemed to feel the same. So we came home with two others, and spent a very happy hour together, round the kitchen fire. We had a delightful conversation together, and I do believe from what

they said, that religion is a subject of much deeper interest to them than it was even a few months since. Our Thursday Evening Meeting appears to have done very great good, though attended only by a few. About fifteen seem to come regularly, and perhaps that is as many as we ought to expect at present."

This Thursday evening class must not be passed by without a word or two. It was a simple meeting of a few teachers and elder scholars, begun by Travers, for reading the Bible, conversation, and prayer. The attendance on it was but small, (partly, however, it should be said, because the evenings of the week were so occupied with various classes and meetings, that many who would gladly have attended, found it impossible to give another evening away from home), but on those who were able to attend the impression made was very deep. There was something in his way of speaking about religious things, that insensibly encouraged us all to speak out any thoughts that rose up in our hearts, in openness and simplicity. Gradually, many were led to engage in prayer, though we all loved best for Travers to close the meetings himself. Sometimes he felt very discouraged about this meeting; but he would not have been if he could have known the deep impression it left upon many a heart, sometimes upon those who sat mute at it, their hearts too full to trust themselves to speak. To his own heart it was peculiarly dear, and sometimes he felt encouraged about it. Thus, in one of his letters, he writes:—

"I have been wishing to speak to you about our Thursday Evenings, which have gradually become more and more interest-

ing. After the meeting at Chowbent the other day, at which I could not feel myself very much at home"—

(this was the Provincial Assembly, an annual gathering of Presbyterian ministers and congregations, dating back from the Commonwealth times, and at this time, twenty years ago, having rather too much of the dinner-and-speech-making element about it for his simple and almost ascetic notions,)

"—I returned to my meeting, and there we had the most heavenly conversation on worshipping in spirit and in truth, arising out of the 4th chapter of St. John. The conversation is so entirely open to all, and so perfectly simple and free, that every one joins in it at once. We hardly knew how to leave off, trying as we were to find an answer to the question how we can best influence the minds of those who are indifferent to religion, and even morality. At present we are chiefly teetotal missionaries in our neighbourhood; I do so long for us all to become something more than this, and this conversation—we shall no doubt fall into it again—will, I hope, lead to that."

The recollection of all these different ways in which he was labouring for his beloved schools, leads naturally to the mention of a work undertaken with the same object, but of far wider scope, the interest of which runs through these years of his Manchester life,—the editing of the "Sunday School Penny Magazine." Cheap periodicals for Sunday scholars, and for little children generally, are now plentiful enough, but in the year 1848 there was no such magazine in existence. At the request of the Manchester District Sunday School Association, Travers undertook the editorship, and from the day that he did so, it became one of the happiest interests of his

life. It was but a trifling matter as a literary work, some four-and-twenty pages a little larger than those of this Memoir, published once a month, but Travers felt very deeply what it was, or might be, to be speaking every month through these pages to some thousands of children of all ages, many of them in very poor homes, and with few influences of good around them. A few words at the beginning of his editorship shews the spirit in which he undertook the work :—

"Our great object and prayer to God is, that the hearts of all those who read these pages may be kept pure from childhood, and early consecrated to the service of God. Of all the sad things this world knows, the saddest is to see the noble powers that God has given, which might be cherished and improved and become the source of such good and happiness to others as none can tell,—to see these powers debased, or at least frittered away, and whole lives spent without one sacred, consecrating end in view, from childhood to old age. The great thing we need is to have our hearts and thoughts more fixed on God. Oh! how blessed is the soul in which His love dwells, and whose 'chiefest joy' it is to do and bear His will. From month to month fresh words will here be written by those who have power to reach the heart, to direct and encourage its best pursuits; to invigorate and strengthen its highest purposes and resolutions; and, more than all, to cherish its love of goodness and of God."

Richly was this promise fulfilled. In his own reading, he was constantly on the look out for anything that he thought likely to touch the hearts of children. "I am marking everything I find that will do for the magazine," he writes; and his letters abound with allusions to articles that have been sent to him, and expressions of anxiety to make it such a work as might really accomplish the one object he ever held in view.

Nor did he lack helpers. More than one beautiful story for children in those early volumes bears the name of Mrs. Gaskell, the authoress of "Mary Barton," and always a willing helper of Travers in all his good work; while Harriet Martineau gave him pleasant accounts of places she had visited in her Eastern Travels; and Mrs. George Dawson, Miss H. M. Rathbone, Miss Lettis, Mrs. Dowson, and others less known perhaps in general literature, but gifted with the happy art of interesting children, rendered frequent aid. Travers did not write very much for it himself, but the occasional page or two of affectionate counsel, always signed by his own name, in which he seemed to be speaking with his numberless unknown readers as simply as if he had them round him in the school, were welcomed far and wide more eagerly than anecdote or tale or travel. Here is a passage from one of these addresses, in the Christmas number for 1850, on "The Christian Home."

"At this season of the year our thoughts naturally turn towards home, and we gladly listen to any means that may be suggested for increasing domestic comfort and happiness. With this view I might refer to many things which I hope to speak of at some future time. But now that we are about to commemorate the birth of our Saviour with the rejoicings of Christmas, I have this one thing to urge above all the rest;—that we should not only join in the angels' welcome of eighteen centuries and a half ago, but also open our hearts and welcome Jesus Christ amongst us *now*. There is no home so happy as the Christian home; the home, I mean, in which the words and life of Christ are continually called to mind as those of a dear friend, and in which are found united at once the cheerfulness of his faith, the tenderness of his sympathy and love, and the earnestness of his devotion and

piety. Whenever I enter such a home, where in spirit Jesus Christ is welcomed, I feel almost as if I heard again the words he used to speak of old—'Peace be with you'—'Be of good cheer'—'Let not your heart be troubled.' Whether we come from our daily work, or from some scene of misery and crime, or from the midst of those trials and temptations to which we are exposed in the world, here is a haven of peace and joy. Some persons are by nature of a buoyant temper and a gladsome heart; but these are sometimes overcome, unless supported by religious faith and principle. To be *always* cheerful is the result of a perfect Christ-like trust in the goodness and love of God; and from this source springs the cheerfulness of a Christian home. But to make home as happy as it ought to be we require, besides this even and cheerful temper, a spirit of self-denying love, a willingness to forego our own indulgences, and a great delight in contributing to the happiness of those around us; where no harsh or angry word is ever heard; where no jealous thought or selfish wish is ever entertained; where those constant little sacrifices are made which no one ever knows anything about; where parents meet with a ready obedience, and little children are helped and cherished and made glad,—there we may say Christ dwells, and there is a happy home. But far, far happier will that home become if He, whose presence is felt in the spirit of cheerfulness and love, be present also in a spirit of devotion and piety. Prayer at home is the natural expression of thankfulness for the joys of home, and for all those blessings which we share with one another. One deep, earnest feeling of gratitude pervades all hearts, and we give utterance to it in company with our nearest and dearest friends. The presence of our heavenly Father thus becomes a reality with us all—a felt and living truth. The thought of Him is not put off till the time of danger and distress—(oh! how poor is such a love, how miserable such a service)—but He is associated with our dearest affections, with the performance of our daily duties, and the supply of our ever-returning wants. Must we wait till we are fatherless, friendless, homeless, before we find a father, a friend, and a home in Him? No, my friends, God is with us in our homes; and when our day's work is done let us gather round Him there. Let us pray to

Him, and thank Him. Let us sing His praises round our firesides, and commend ourselves and one another to His forgiving love and tender care. This be my farewell wish and prayer—that God may bless us all with happy Christian homes and loving Christ-like hearts."

Words like these, emphasized by love for their writer, for he was known and loved through all the schools in the district, are not among the least of the influences of this period of his life.

It was not at the school alone that his influence was felt. The college at which he had studied was still in Manchester (it has since been removed to London); and mindful of his own college days, and of the deep need he had felt then of some older and truly religious friend, he tried to keep up his acquaintance with the students, and to be a friend and helper to them. He was not altogether happy about those student days of his. After reading the college part of Dr. Channing's life, he writes :—

"It fills my mind with self-rebuking thoughts. Those days were spent but idly by me. 'Ernst ist das leben' [*Life is earnest*] was not known to me then, and all the lectures were more or less neglected."

So his heart yearns towards the young men, most of whom came to college direct from school, with all their schoolboy habits of thought and life and unformed character; not, indeed, without pure and good aspirations, but sadly needing the close personal influence of older friends--something closer and more intimate than mere professorial instruction—to cherish the first spirit of piety, and enable them to grow up

into fervent and faithful ministers. We find him speaking, in one of his letters, of his desire to have them to come and see him at his lodgings, only he is "afraid he should not know how to entertain them." This anxiety for them constantly appears in his letters. Thus, when some talk arose of removing the College to London, he writes warmly against it:—

"I do most earnestly hope that the college will not be removed. The more I think upon the subject the more desirable does it appear to me that it should remain where it is. I can imagine no atmosphere for young ministers worse than London, no place where there will be fewer opportunities for drawing forth the powers and spirit which are so much needed."

Considerations of this kind were not unfelt by many of the council of the College, but the educational advantages of a closer connection with University College, were felt to outweigh these less palpable considerations, and the College was ultimately removed to its present habitation in Gordon Square. Other difficulties of the system pursued in our college are also alluded to in others of his letters, and the following extract especially is not without value, as suggestive of one needful alteration in the plan usually pursued in Nonconformist colleges, of sending youths to be educated for the ministry at an early age, with an implication that if, later on in their course, they abandon their ministerial destination, they in some sort commit a breach of faith.

"It appears to me necessary that students should not be ex-

pected to decide on becoming ministers till they are 18 or 19; that scholarships should be earned; that they should gradually increase from the first year to the last, and that inducements should be held out for students to remain until they are 24 or 25 years of age. Think how unsettled I was when I left college, and students generally feel themselves quite unfitted for their work at so early an age."

Those of us who responded to his endeavours to seek our friendship while we were thus students at college, will never forget the tenderness and helpfulness of the sympathy we received from him. It was not that he made any forced effort to win our confidence, but that there was on his own part that affectionate sympathy, that openness of heart towards others which insensibly led them to open their hearts to him. I remember that in those days he spoke to me as no man had ever spoken to me before; seemed instinctively to know the struggles and aspirations which often make the beginning of the endeavour to turn to a religious life so hard a time; and then, telling me freely his own trials and sorrows, before we parted he would kneel down with me in his little room, and pray such prayers as I have never heard before or since. These are deep experiences to remember, almost too deep to write down, yet I could not refrain from some mention of them, for I know that there are many to whom such hours have been the turning point of life, and I recall them that they may encourage others to have more of that trust which he had in the religious nature of those about him, and learn that more frank and outspoken spirit which enabled him to render them such help.

For myself I have the deepest cause to be thankful for the friendship he so freely gave me. Younger by some years than he was, not entering college till two or three years after his course was finished, he nevertheless was to me as a brother, bound to him as I was by the double tie of being one of the teachers with him in the Lower Mosley Street Schools, and a young student preparing for the ministry. With him I talked over my college work and college difficulties. With him, morning by morning, I met at five o'clock, in order to ensure a few hours study before breakfast, by having a fixed engagement with him to go on his rounds of "knocking-up." "Knocking-up" is a Manchester institution. There are men who gain their living, by undertaking to call the factory people at the necessary hour in the morning for them to be at their work when the six o'clock bell rings, and Travers caught at this idea as a means of forcing himself to early rising, engaging to act as knocker-up to some dozen families in the streets near his house. Winter and summer, frost, snow, or whatever might be the weather, he would have us turn out for our round, and then we each of us returned to our lodgings fresh and vigorous for a couple of hours work. Travers's work in those early hours was reading. During the day he found his time almost hopelessly taken up by his school work, but those morning hours he kept sacredly for self-improvement. Many an interesting passage do his letters contain in reference to the books which from time to time he is reading. Now (January 30th, 1849), it is the life of Channing he is studying, a beau-

tiful life, though hardly made the best of in the biography, as Travers indeed hints :—

"*January 30th*, 1849.

"I have been reading Dr. Channing this morning as usual. I have time for everything now! and certainly I do find these chapters on Social Reform, Anti-Slavery, and Politics very uninteresting after the two first volumes. I long for 'friends' and 'home,' with which the work concludes. It only shews how much less we care for what a man *does* than for what he *is*. The two go together in life, and in the proper history of a life they should go together. The perfection of all biography, to my mind, is the simple narrative given of the life of Christ. The *doing* and the *being* there seem perfectly to unite. The cutting up of Dr. Channing's life into sections, according to various subjects and not periods, the dividing of his letters and himself into scientific compartments, is the ruin of the work as far it depended on the biographer."

And again, three days later :—

"*February 2nd*, 1849.

"I finished the life of Dr. Channing this morning. I could not help feeling sorrow at closing the book. Morning after morning I have risen to share for a time the holy influence of his company. The book has been a very great help to me; but the first part is by far the most deeply interesting—most to do with the real heart and life. Again and again I regret the forced division of the book. How beautifully, in the life of Dr. Arnold, came in the few words here and there about 'Mary' and his children, and the beauties of his 'mountain home'; and how much more perfectly one can realize Dr. Arnold both at Rugby and at Fox How, without any regular full description being given, than one can Dr. Channing. I cannot say that I knew Dr. Arnold better, however, for those extracts from Dr. Channing's journal help me to know him in his heart, to a degree that is scarcely ever permitted even in the case of those who have met face to face. But still I see Dr. Arnold in the midst of all his duties,

and all his thoughts and plans, and all his affections and enjoyments at one and the same time, whilst Dr. Channing, in the dry details and repetitions of his anti-slavery writings and proceedings, hardly feels to be the same man as is passing through the experience and discipline described in the first part of the Memoir."

A little later we come across a notice of Professor Francis W. Newman, not the less interesting from the fact that Travers had been one of his pupils at Manchester New College :—

"*June 9th*, 1849.

"Mrs. Darbishire is very kind in lending me books. I have got Mr. Newman's book on the Soul, which I never know how to lay down, it is so full of the most deep heart-truth. I never rebuke myself more than when I think of the feelings I used to entertain towards him at college. We never understood each other, I believe. At least I did not begin to know him till shortly before I left ; and I believe he thought me more idle and shallow than I really was. A man never lived with a purer heart, or more child-like freshness of soul, combined with such great and varied powers. He understands thoroughly all the subjects which he takes in hand, and writes now on classics, now on some extinct oriental language, now on mathematics, now on the Hebrew monarchy, now on logic, and now at last this book (most beautiful and suggestive as far as I have read it) on the soul.

"When I think of such men as he, I often wish that there was but one subject in which I was a real and thorough scholar. With my natural bent I might have been such in mathematics, and I often think now that if it were only to save myself from my universal shallowness it would be well to continue my studies in this subject; or is it best to read only the general sort of books, now on one subject, now on another, which are continually coming out, and which one always wants to read at the time?"

Among his warmest Manchester friends were Mr. and Mrs. Schwabe—Salis Schwabe, a great Manchester calico printer and bleacher, with extensive works at Middleton, some five miles out, full then of kindliest interest, as his widow is still, in all good men and good works. They were very anxious that Travers should take in hand the religious teaching of their little children, and he consented to give them an hour or so every Saturday afternoon. It is a new field of work for him—quick, sensitive children, who have been taught to think and inquire, "with so many questions and thoughts which I hardly know how to deal with." "I do not know why it is, but I feel as if touching much more tender and susceptible material than I have been accustomed to." And his letter about all this gives us a very interesting insight into his thoughts on some of these matters connected with the religious education of children, especially about catechisms and the learning of little prayers:—

"*August* 18*th*, 1848.

"I cannot make up my mind to teaching any catechism that I ever saw. I do not suppose I could to teaching any catechism at all. When properly used I dare say they might be interesting, but I do not know how to use them. They are the least suggestive things to me that I ever met with. If they do suggest anything beyond themselves, I feel sorry that the child is cramped up to learning only what is in the book. I have got several catechisms by me, and they may serve to guide me a little in my instructions, but I do not think I could use them. 'The Flock at the Fountain' has some nice things in it. I have almost thought that we might read over the catechism part and talk about it; that when I go away they might look it over again,

and talk about it, and learn the prayer at the end of each division. This is Mr. Tayler's idea. They are simple, beautiful little prayers. But I almost dread to ask them to learn prayers by heart. Their mother should hear their own thoughts and their own words. Children, however, may perhaps be helped by some simple little prayers. I remember I used to like saying a little prayer, which my mother wrote out for me, very much. I should like your thoughts about this, and if you have not seen 'The Flock at the Fountain' I will send it you. I heard of a little child of four years old, the other day, saying, when she did not know that anybody was near, 'Thank you, good God, for making me such a happy little girl; good night, God; I cannot say any more to you now.'"

THE THORN IN THE FLESH.

"*And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.*"

No one knows what was the dark, sad mystery of Paul's life, which is here suggested rather than described. It has been thought to have been some deformity of person, or perhaps a stammering speech, taking it to be the explanation of that passage in which he speaks of people saying of him, that though his letters were "weighty and powerful," his "bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible." Others have thought it to have been some haunting weakness, some sad liability to sudden physical or mental prostration, which chafed his active and impetuous spirit into bitter self-reproach, and at times made him utterly hopeless and despairing about himself. This we know, however, that it was something which was a great trial and burden to him; something which seemed a hinderance to his usefulness, a weaken-

ing of his power to serve God; and I cannot help finding in it the explanation of deeper words than any mere taunt at a weak presence or a defective speech,—the explanation of that under-current of deep feeling—consciousness of weakness and sin, taking refuge in his love of Christ and God—which runs through the 7th and 8th chapters of his Epistle to the Romans. This it was, I always think, which he felt as the "law of sin and death" holding him captive, even though he "delighted in the law of God after the inward man,"—this which wrung from him that agonized cry, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"—and this also, it must not be forgotten, which, when in course of time he came to feel that it was the will of God, led him to feel that he could even thank God for it, since it had thrown him back only the more completely on a strength greater than his own;—"Most gladly, therefore, will I glory in infirmities, *that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*"

Those who knew Travers Madge, at all intimately, will feel that, whether or no this was the case with St. Paul, it was deeply true of himself. It is an awful mystery, the relation which God has caused to exist between the soul and the body, and the way in which the weakness and infirmity of the bodily life seem sometimes utterly to conquer and break down the soul, even in those whose spiritual life is strongest and saintliest. That mystery—never to be solved in this life,—is the key to the darkest and saddest side of our friend's experience. To that pure soul, into that

beautiful life, filled with holiest thought and loving cares for others, there came seasons of utter darkness and prostration, seasons when all his previous life and effort seemed to collapse miserably and utterly. All the bright happy faith in which he had seemed to walk as in the very light of God, was clouded over. It seemed to him, at such times, as if the whole world was given over to wickedness, and all goodness was a mere outward show, and it was no use striving against evil, either in his own soul or in the world. Sometimes, in the intensity of this feeling, he would wander off from home and friends, aimlessly, simply craving to get right away from comforts, and associations, and ways of life which seemed to him a mockery of the lost forsaken misery, with which his work had made him so familiar. Then succeeded a deep depression, an utter weariness of life, a miserable sense of the prostration of all moral and spiritual power, and a sense of weakness and unworthiness, sad, hopeless, and utterly broken-hearted. This was his thorn in the flesh. He strove against it. *He* "besought the Lord thrice," and many a time besides, that it might depart from him; but in vain; at intervals, almost to his life's end, these periods came upon his soul. It was after such times that he finally resolved, when at college, that he could not enter the ministry, and that he broke up his quiet life at Norwich, to go to Cornwall. It was this which kept wearing him into illness, and which aged him into a grey-haired man before he was thirty-five. It was this which made his life such a series of fragmentary efforts, of labours commenced

only to be by and by laid down. From these periods he came forth a different man. Whatever work of good he had been engaged in previously, he felt as if he were unworthy to take it up again, and yet, by this very weakness, his strength was, in one sense, strangely "made perfect." For from it came that trembling self-distrust, that sympathy for all the struggling and tempted, that deep pity for the fallen, that longing, beseeching fervency of prayer in striving to lay hold upon the strength and mercy of God, which touched the hearts of all with whom he came into contact. And so, fragmentary as his labours were, yet ever begun anew with an unconquerable tenacity which not even sickness could daunt, they form altogether a life of rare and beautiful impressiveness.

It was in the light and shadow of such experience that Travers was carrying on his Manchester ministry at the schools, after the first flush of eager joy in his new work was passed. Sometimes he was hopeful, sometimes depressed. In February, 1849, (he had come to Manchester in the April of the previous year), he wrote thus hopefully:—

> "I do not know how it was at first I seemed so useless, and now God is helping me to make sick people so happy, and among well people—teachers and everybody—I get on so much better than I did. The dead weight is gone! Such a happy family we shall be ere long."

It was but a fortnight later, however, that he was writing thus despondently, though still clinging to his work with an earnestness which is the more touching for his sadness :—

"*February* 19*th*, 1849.

"It is coming very nearly to the end of my first year's work, and I can report but very little good of myself. I have made but little progress. The few sick people I have called upon I seem to know something of, but even amongst them I have done but little good. Our Sunday evening services are very poorly attended. None, or at least very few of the things which I have taken in hand, can be said to have prospered. If I am asked to give a report of my labours, I can say *nil*. The only things to which I can point are disappointments and failures. The kindly spirit amongst us all—the influence I may have exerted in the school, whether it has been good or not, cannot be pointed to at all—there is nothing marked enough in them; and I cannot but feel that my supporters here—oh, that I needed none—will be sadly disappointed with the result of this year. *I*, too, am disappointed, but not discouraged. The fault has been in myself, and still does it lie there. The wasting of time is my great fault. For months, too, you know how I was. Altogether I have not visited a quarter as much as I ought to have done. And yet I would not leave my work for all the world. If my supporters are disappointed, as they *must be*, and if they give me up (and the first year was only an experiment) I would still remain here, and take hold of anything that might present itself. No more change for me; I have chosen my field; I love my work; I see its greatness and its need."

A greater change was at hand. Two months after this time came the annual meeting of the Lower Mosley Street Schools. Travers was asked to attend it, though with the distinct understanding that no report was expected of him, as it was generally felt that his work was of a kind that did not admit of being stated in any such formal way, and indeed that he himself could hardly speak of at all. It is not everybody, however, who can understand either such

scruples of feeling or such imponderable work; and one of the committee, who had all along doubted the utility of this office of Home Visitor, got up at the meeting, and publicly asked for a detailed account of what he had been doing during the year. The requirement was at once disclaimed by the meeting, but coming as it did upon Travers when he was in the reaction of such a depression as has been described, it wrought upon him so painfully that he felt he could not continue in his office, at least that he could not any longer receive anything for it. To the great grief of every one connected with the schools, he gave up his work there in a day, and resolved at once to seek some humble labour by which he might support himself, while still giving his leisure to his old work. At first he hoped for a clerkship, but found that this was more difficult to obtain than he had imagined; and in the end he resolved to accept the offer of a position in the printing-office of Messrs. Johnson and Rawson, a well-known firm in Manchester, the members of which were glad to help him, Mr. Harry Rawson especially having long been a warm and kind friend. On April 20th—two days later he was to begin his new life of toil—he writes to his dear home at Norwich all that is in his heart :—

"*April 20th*, 1849.

"What would I not give if you could be with me now, or I with you! When I long for peace and a blessing I always turn my thoughts to you, and now I do strangely feel the want of you. I cannot tell why I should be so little at rest. I have only done what seemed to me best, and if I have done wrong that must be

my comfort. A thousand thoughts and feelings seem to pull me in various ways. Now I laugh at the idea of my new condition, a shop boy at last, calling for keys every morning at my master's house, taking down shutters for all I know, and sweeping out the shop; black one minute with printer's ink, and the next standing behind the counter! It does make me laugh, and it makes others laugh too, and our brotherhood pass many a joke about it. But it is not all a laughing matter. If I were what the world says women are, I could sit me down and cry, for indeed my heart is ready to burst. I have acted all alone, and not only alone, but against the advice and desires of all for whom I care, or whose judgment I respect. I have bound myself down, another man's servant, for three long years; valuable time indeed to lose if it should prove a loss, and time enough to break me up altogether, body and soul, if they should prove years of sorrow. It grieves me also to think that more time is consumed in my daily labour than I had at first intended, when, as you know, I thought of warehouse hours from nine to five. It will take me much more than I had hoped from my school work and joys. And there will be no month's holiday to spend together; no running over for two or three days to one's own home in those times of deepest agony, when one feels banished from the home we should ever find in God. Perhaps there will not be a single day which we shall be able to pass together, at least beneath our own dear roof, throughout these three long, long years. But God help me not to despair. I have done what I thought best, and I hope, I hope it will all be well. Come happy, glorious thoughts, come and cheer me like the angels! I *think* it will be good for me—good to know such a trade as that I am about to learn—good to have a business education, and to gain business experience and habits,—good even to be *fixed down* for these three years, and to be compelled to work actively, regularly, and diligently."

A pleasant, merry letter enough at first sight, and yet forced, and with an undertone of sadness, giving an insight into the struggle it was to him to do this. Even its exaggerations—for it need hardly be said

that his position had nothing of this "shop-boy" element in it, but was one of mutual confidence and respect—betray the same endeavour to assume a happiness which he did not really feel. Once in the work, however, his spirits rise, and on April 24th, he writes thus, in more healthy style:—

"*April 24th*, 1849.

"My hours and plans for the future will be as follows: Up by 4½. From that time to 7½ to myself. Breakfast at 7½. Go to my work at 8. Dinner at 1. I take my dinner in the morning in a little basin, done up in a handkerchief, and leave it at H—— W——'s, which is on the way, about five minutes from the shop. Dine at H—— W——'s. Read newspapers or some other light amusement till 2. Work till 7. Get a penny loaf, and go to school or visits. Home again by ¼ to 10. Bed at 10. In a letter to a young minister, Henry Ware says—'Give four hours to yourself, four to visits, one or two to odds and ends.' Mine is not far off this. The business is a rest to me; leaves me time to think, too, and yet is an employment. It was very pleasant yesterday, and there is every prospect that I shall quite enjoy my new life, apart from thinking it *best*.

"You ought to see how very kind my father has been in his letters, so I send you one."

Again, at the end of the first week, he gives the following pleasant account of himself:—

"*April 28th*, 1849.

"I have now come within two hours of the end of my first week, and you will wish to know how I like it. You must remember I'm a 'new broom,' and have hardly had time, as you will think, to give it a fair trial. But hitherto I have thoroughly enjoyed it. The harder the work the happier am I. Some day you will come and see me at my work, in my shirt sleeves and apron. By that time my arms will no longer ache, nor my hands be sore in one place and blistered in another, as they are at present. I generally get to see one or two of our scholars before

the evening classes. Time flies as quick as thought. Morning, noon, and evening come in no time, and never a moment now is idly spent. This is dinner-hour, when I always read, or write some odd note. My mornings are precious for my own study, and my evenings are full of occupations to which it is my rest and enjoyment to attend. I no longer feel heavy at nights, as I used to do, and worn with the thought that I had been wasting a day—low and languid, and unwilling to see any one or do anything, as was, alas! too often the case. It is all brisk, active work now, and when my spare hours come, I seem brimful of life, so that I can do in the same time two or three times as much, with a light and gladsome spirit. I must have been made for work like this, it comes so naturally, and seems to suit me so perfectly. This is a long account of myself, but I thought you would be anxious to know how so new a life agrees with me."

His life amidst these new associations was characterized by the same gentleness and unselfishness, and power of insensibly attracting the love of all about him, as it had ever been. The men in the printing-office all loved him, and his influence among them was very strong; and he gave himself to his work among them with the same frank, joyous enthusiasm as he had done to preaching or teaching. His leisure, not what usually passes for leisure, but literally every hour away from business, was given to his old beloved work at the schools. He was up by five; and even then, labours for the magazine, or work arising out of his classes and visiting, left him little space for the quiet studies to which at first he had reserved those early morning hours. And after his work for the day at the shop was over, he was rushing off on some kindly errand; visiting some sick scholar; looking after some poor factory lad or girl whom he feared

was not going on quite so well as he wished; and by and by in the school, for the "Religious Improvement" meeting, or some other evening class. The work was too hard for him. His bodily strength was not equal to such constant strain and labour; and before two months are out, pressed by his Norwich friends about his health, he owns to frequent returns of hœmorrhage, and to something wrong in his chest. Yet still, in the same letters, he writes glowingly about the blessing of all this hard work calling him off from his old habits of reverie. Higher and higher burns his zeal. In July he writes:—

"I have discovered that five o'clock is not early enough to rise, and for the last month have got up at half-past three. I have two miles to walk every morning, knocking up an early class, and then meeting them at the house of my good friend, Nat Dumville."

As might be expected, in a few months this intensity of strain is working to its natural reaction. The spirit is still willing—how willing let the following extract of a letter, written from a sick bed, tell:—

"I cannot help contrasting all you say about Mr. —— with my friend here. No doubt he does to a great degree feel earth to be 'a desert drear'; but the real effect upon him is to make him more earnest and faithful in doing all he can for others, and in the name of God. He takes refuge in God; and so *I* have always found it. The work which God gives one to do is a real blessing and comfort to the troubled spirit. When everything else seems gone, this is the only satisfaction, working with a loving heart for Him who is all-in-all. When most in despair I feel almost to nestle with Him as a little child in its mother's lap. Some may think there is a want of reverence in the words, but 'dear God' is what I feel, and did I not feel it I should be comfortless."

Yes, the spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak. When he does give up, however, he does it with a good grace, and writes of "the delightful privilege of being ill and obliged to rest." Nor is his illness without its elements of comfort and thankfulness. When the Thursday Meeting comes, reminded of it by his inability to be present, he writes in a rather discouraging strain about it—there seemed to have come a lull in its interest. This letter breaks off there; and when he resumes it next day, it is to tell of encouragement that had come to him.

"I was stopped last night by a large party, I should think the whole meeting coming down to see me. I was sitting in my bedroom, writing this letter. They all sat down where they could, some on chairs, some on the bed, and then we had half-an-hour's cheerful talk together. They seemed to have had a most satisfactory evening again, which makes me hope that some conversation we have had has not been in vain. Before they went away Mrs. Kay [his housekeeper] joined us, and we had our evening hymn and prayer together."—[*November 9th*, 1849.]

He was back again at his work in a few days, but only for a while. What with manual toil, and mornings and nights spent in labours for others, and a bare simplicity of life always verging on asceticism, and often hardly amounting to sufficient support, he by and by broke down again, and severe illness compelled the giving up of his engagement at Johnson and Rawson's, and a complete change of scene.

As ever at such times, his heart turns to his Norwich home, and he goes thither in February, 1850, only to re-visit Manchester at intervals for long years to come.

CHANGES.

During this year, 1850, and the following year, there is little of outward incident to tell. Of the inward life, however, there is much. Changes of the deepest import were silently going on in his thought and faith,—changes which gradually led him into new religious associations, and gave their character to his whole after life. It is necessary that these should be spoken of in perfect candour and simplicity.

Travers had been brought up among Unitarians, but never was a *sectarian* Unitarian. Sectarianism of any kind was a thing utterly foreign to his nature. Whilst still attached to Unitarianism, and strongly feeling what he then thought to be its moral and spiritual superiority over other forms of Christian faith, he had as great a horror of dogmatism and controversialism among Unitarians as he afterwards shewed for the same qualities among the friends of his later religious life. He always loved most to dwell on the deeper, spiritual aspects of religion, on those points in which different sects agree rather than on those in which they differ. More almost than anything else in the atmosphere of Unitarian thought and piety which he had breathed from childhood, he valued its perfect liberty and its perfect trust in God. Those who only know Unitarianism from the descriptions of others,

can have little idea how broad and catholic is the view of other systems and churches which prevails among such circles as those in which Travers grew up. Encouraged to read the devotional literature of other faiths as readily as that of his own; to look for truth in the creeds, and for goodness in the men of all churches, he was especially attracted by every form of fervent, loving piety. From the first the warm, brotherly, outspoken religious life of Methodism took a strong hold on his heart. He had seen much of it, and in its best form, among the little congregations of Rossendale Unitarians, who had come out from the *doctrines* of Methodism while retaining its best *spirit* and *life*. As early as 1844, he wrote thus of Methodism, apropos of a Methodist with whom he had become acquainted:—

"The worst fault is his want of humility. This is the worst part in the Methodist system. He feels that he is one of "the religious," and may, therefore, almost hold himself up as a model. This is *very* common among the Methodists, I fear. Remember, that while I see their good parts, I am not blind to their defects. The Unitarians at Rawtenstall may have this fault, but I have not seen it in them."

At this time Travers was still a thorough Unitarian, regarding all attempts at distinctions in the Godhead as tending to mere confusion of thought about the Heavenly Father, and shrinking from the language of orthodoxy as to the Saviour,—and especially from the idea of his sacrifice giving men some claim on mercy and forgiveness which they could not else have had,—as detracting from the perfect love and trust due to

that Heavenly Father. How strongly his mind was possessed by the positive side of this thought, is well shewn in the following outline, which he gives in one of his Cornish letters, of a lecture he was giving while there as Unitarian Missionary. "Here," he writes, "are the bare bones of it."

"*To us there is but one God the Father.*

"The character of God as told us by Christ, as seen in Christ's communion with him, and as revealed in the character of Christ.

"Hence first:—Although our conceptions of God are to a great extent human, yet the idea of Him as a Father is capable of continual growth and becoming higher and higher. The character of a parent—the growth of love from infancy until it becomes purest and most disinterested and deepest in a parent. Our thoughts of God must never violate our highest conceptions of a Father's love.

"And secondly—They must never be inconsistent with our thoughts of Christ. The perfect spiritual union between God and Christ.

"These two principles fixed upon our minds will be a test for the truth of every doctrine.

"Fruits of the doctrine that God is our Father:—
His service is perfect freedom.
His presence and care is our peace and joy.

"The *true* spirit of prayer, as distinguished from all prayer that is false and unnatural. The readiness of God to forgive upon our repentance, as in the Prodigal Son. The true purpose of sorrow, trials and punishment in this world, or the world to come. Hence the Christian view of death,—for infants and all of us.

"The light thrown by the great principles previously laid down, upon all things in earth and heaven. The *Home* feeling that the Christian has, even here, in proportion as the kingdom of heaven is within him; and the thought of going home at last."

The one constant theme in his letters, too, was the love of God, and trust in His unchanging and everlasting mercy. Upon this he was never tired of dwelling, alike in his letters, his preaching and his conversation. This, indeed, was his central thought all through his life, but, later on, it presented itself to his mind more distinctly as—the love of God *in Christ.* As life passed on, however, and he got deeper into its stern experiences, of broken health, and inward struggle, and the reaction of utter despondency which has been spoken of, wants arose within him which his old faith seemed unable to satisfy. He felt his inability to attain, by all his conflict, that ideal of holy and perfect life for which he longed and prayed. He felt as if the tears of all eternity could not wash out the stains of sin, and there came a restless craving—a cry out of the depths—for some faith which might at once give him greater strength and a more settled peace, and more completely take him, as it were, out of himself. From the darkness of those occasional periods of despondency grew an intensity of self-reproach, and a feeling of the sinner being utterly outcast from God, such as those about him, who felt him to be the tenderest and purest of their friends, and in whom he had aroused that trust in God's unchangeable and everlasting love, could hardly respond to. I remember one day when we were walking together, and we had been having some close argument on those changes which were coming over his mind, he suddenly turned upon me with the question, "Don't you feel that you deserve to be tormented and punished for ever?" I

could not say "yes" to that question, for, as I told him, I had come, and largely through his own influence, to feel the terribleness of sin in an altogether different way. But he *could* say "yes" to it; and this overwhelming sense of sin was the key to much in his later views.

It would be difficult to define the exact change in his religious opinions, as doctrinal questions, such *e.g.* as the Trinity, had never much interest for him. On such subjects he always shrank from any expressions beyond the simple language of Scripture, but the words "God was in Christ" came to have a meaning to him beyond the highest thought held by Unitarians of the indwelling spirit of God in Christ. And so, too, a sense of some mysterious and wonderful work of grace wrought by the sacrifice of Christ; a sense of Christ's death having in some way procured him a peace and pardon and restoration to holiness that otherwise could never have been held out to him, took strong possession of his heart. This, as a friend who shared his views writes to me, one who knew him far better than I did—"This was the rock he stood on, and amidst all the storms of life he never lost his hold on it."

A letter which he wrote about this time to the Rev. Franklin Howorth, of Bury, in Lancashire, will give a better idea than any of the fragmentary allusions to such matters in his ordinary correspondence, of the line of thought in which his mind was moving. To this life-long friend, under whose roof he always found a home, and to whose sympathy he ever turned with

surest confidence, Travers writes as follows. It is a long letter, but will be read with deep interest; and I will therefore give as much of it as I dare, for there are passages in it which could not be given without violating the privacy of feelings and experiences too sacred to be unveiled to the world :—

"*Norwich.*

"My dear Friend,—I am wishing to write you a long letter, for I have much to say, and yet I hardly know whether you will like to give me so much of your time. You have in your last kind letter set me the example, but I am afraid I shall out-do you. There will be nothing in this except some of the many thoughts which have been passing through my mind of late; and, therefore, you can read it at your leisure, or not at all. If you do read it, and have any remarks to make, or any help to give,—any thoughts of your own, confirming or modifying or destroying what may be here expressed—I shall be most truly and deeply thankful for them. And, indeed, it is with some hope that you may find time for this that I am intending to write to you so fully.

"I referred in one of my former letters to conversations I had had with Mr. Lalor. One of the subjects on which we conversed was the government of God, and the objects and character of His punishments. I had always entertained the notion, that the punishments of God were a corrective discipline through which we should have to pass in order that our souls might be purified, and rendered fit for heaven. Such a view as this I have always felt too *weak*, though I have earnestly maintained it. I have felt it—and I do even now feel it—a temptation to look lightly upon sin. The sins of others and myself, I have regarded more with pity than with hatred. Seeing *others*, I could have wished myself the vilest of the vile; for as I have long since told you, sympathy and pity are a passion with me And feeling *my own* temptations, I have yielded to them with a sort of vague notion that they were too strong to be resisted, or that at any rate, I might defer the struggle till God should begin to cure me

by such discipline or treatment as He might think best. I think some such view of punishment as I have mentioned, is generally entertained amongst Unitarians; and that they are somewhat apt to regard sin as the worst of diseases, and the saddest of misfortunes, but nothing more. The extreme to which I have described myself as going, I do not, however, charge upon these doctrines, but on the use that *may* be made of them when under the influence of temptation. They are not strong enough to help one against temptation. The fact is, that sin is something essentially different from disease or calamity. For *these* we should feel sorrow and pity, for *that* nothing but unmitigated loathing and hatred. So, God may chasten those whom He loveth, even as a father chasteneth his children. This is the mild language used in reference to the afflictions of Christians, and for such chastenings, whether here or hereafter, we must be thankful. But those who are hard and impenitent in their hearts "treasure up for themselves wrath against the day of wrath," "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish." The whole language of Scripture against sin, and those who wilfully abide in sin, is fearfully strong and unyielding. The sinner who continues in his sin, can hear nothing in the gospel, but that the curse of God rests upon him to the uttermost, that he will be for ever banished from the presence of God, that he will be cut up root and branch, and utterly destroyed; there is not a ray of hope held out for the sinner who remains to the last hardened and impenitent. If sin met only with the sorrow or pity of God, and with such corrective discipline as He might see fit to inflict in order to bring us round, I could not pray to be *forgiven.* I have known those who have come to this conclusion, and it seems to me a fair inference from such a view. If I pray to be forgiven, I must have some thought of the *wrath* of God, and of His punishment as *retributive.* Of course, I mean nothing revengeful or passionate by 'wrath,' but something much more fearful than the common Unitarian 'displeasure.' Moreover, is it not great presumption on our part to say that we shall all become holy and good in the course of time? Who can reconcile this with human freedom—*shall, must* be good? This cannot be declared of any free agent. I do not wish to lose myself in metaphysics; but I do say that those

who plunge into the future and prophesy universal restoration, are speaking of things of which they know nothing, and that human reason is as much against them as for them. The result of all to my mind is as follows:

"That God visits sin, and the hardened and impenitent sinner, with indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish.

"That there is a certain fearful looking forward to judgment and fiery indignation. That God is so good and has such love to all that He spares nothing, not even His own Son, to save us from our sins.

"That whilst in many things the future is uncertain, we must trust in this same goodness and love of God as remaining firm and unchangeable for ever.

"I think the views generally held amongst Unitarians, and the certainty with which they look forward to a happy end for all, have had a tendency to check their zeal in the *salvation of souls*. They see how beautiful a thing the soul of man may be, and they try to train and perfect it, perhaps more than any others; but when lost they seldom try to save or rescue it. Hence *education* rather than *conversion* has been their work. Hence, too, a want of sympathy with those who are groaning and despairing under a sense of their sins.

"It is often said that the very fact of sin being evil in itself, and contrary to God's will, ought to be sufficient to make us do all we can to blot it out. But I cannot conceal from you that the thought of the future, perhaps eternal, consequences of it,—pictured forth in Scripture by language short of truth yet the most fearful that human heart can conceive,—has made a deep impression on my mind, and increased tenfold any zeal or interest I might have felt before in the work of *conversion*.

"With regard to religion, this [conversion] is a work of at least equal importance with that of education. It is not so with regard to such a subject as total abstinence. To reclaim drunkards is, indeed, a great and good work, but education (embracing teetotalism as one of the simplest applications of science, morality and religion) will be the surest protection against future intemperance,—may almost be expected in the course of a generation or two to banish intemperance. In *religion*, however, the work of reclaiming

or converting will always have to be carried on, at least until the millennium begins. Multitudes of those who have had the best education will be overcome by the lusts of the flesh, and the cares and temptations of the world, till in future life, after a career of carelessness, perhaps of profligacy, religion may be brought again fresh and powerful and convincing to their hearts. This work of conversion, then, ought to be one of the chief objects of our Christian churches, and public services, and indeed of all our religious efforts. Without this end in view we shall be without union and without zeal. A great and burning desire to rescue those who are perishing seems to be, to our natures, the most uniting and animating of all things. With this increased desire to engage in the work of conversion, you will understand how I have been compelled to think about those doctrines of Christianity which have the greatest power over the hearts of the careless, worldly-minded, or corrupt. And what I have been seeking for others I find also that I most want myself—a power which can renew the heart, fill it, clothe it, inspire it afresh, change its affections;—so that henceforth, however it may be tempted, it may love sin no more, but God only, and the will of God.

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"It is some weeks since I wrote the above. They have been partly weeks of darkness and despair, such as I dare not dwell upon in my own thoughts, or speak of to others. It is, indeed, only through the mercy of God that I am spared to write these words. Thanks to Him, and to Him alone, the fearful struggle is past; and I have a feeling of peace beyond anything I ever experienced before. And yet I am almost afraid to speak of peace. Surrounded here by dearest friends, one especially whose whole thoughts and conversation are like heaven—away from every sight or sound of evil, and enjoying much religious intercourse with an earnest Christian minister and people (Independents), I feel that I am in no situation to judge of what I may become when these helps are removed. Much, indeed, as I rejoice in the thought of returning to Manchester, it is with fear and trembling. And yet, dear friend, I do feel as if I were clinging to something of which I had never laid hold before. I

think I have tried everything, but never till now the one thing that was needful. I have tried the helps of occupation and variety; of abstemious living, exercise, &c.; of reading holy books; of conversing with dear friends, and of attending religious services. I have struggled, and wept, and prayed.

"At last, in the deepest shame and uttermost despair, I was led to look to Jesus. When I thought I could hardly come to God on account of my sins, it was told me that 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that all who believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' When I felt that I did not love God as I ought, I was told not to think of my own feelings; that the more I tried to love Him, the more impossible I might find it, for the very effort often rendered it impossible,—but still to look to Jesus,—to read in him the expression of God's will,—to feel in him the outpourings of God's love; and thus by looking to Jesus,—to Jesus living, praying, and dying on the cross, to save me, and every wretched, perishing soul,—to love God *because* He first loved us.

"It is impossible to pass through such a time as this has been to me, without learning many things of which I knew nothing before; and some of the lessons which I have learned of late, are, I think, such as are seldom alluded to or spoken of among Unitarians. Indeed, from the tone of their preaching and writing—with a few exceptions, such as Mr. Martineau—one would suppose them to be men brought up in comparative innocence and purity, and having had little experience of inward struggle. Unitarian preaching and devotion will help one through many sorrows and trials; will comfort one in many afflictions; will strengthen and purify and bless the heart; but it will not in general enable one to pass through the seasons of fiercest struggle with the devil, and of reckless, hopeless despair. At least, so I have found it. Even such a book as Henry Ware's, describing as it does most beautifully, the Christian temper and character, and urging many reasons for its cultivation, does not lead one out of oneself to fix a steady gaze on the cross of Christ, as we lie wounded and bleeding at its foot. There are times when struggle with oneself—the resistance of evil—the habit of self-control—should be preached and enforced. But to lead any one to *wish*

to struggle with himself, to *wish* to resist evil, to *wish* to exert his power of self-control, in a word to hate all sin, and to long after a holier life at whatever cost, can only be done by urging and inviting him to *look to Christ.* Until he feels that Jesus, and Jesus *only*, can save him, and lead him to the Father,—until he feels a *personal interest* in the Saviour, and is led by this to lay hold of him, and cleave to him, and hang upon him, and unconsciously receive the virtue which flows forth from him on all who touch his garment,—he will never know what it is to be born of the Spirit, and become a new creature in Christ Jesus.

"The tendency of the Unitarian religion is to be entirely subjective. I say the *tendency*, because Unitarianism is not by any means of the extreme character that I mean by *entirely subjective.* The idea I would convey by these words will be best understood by a few examples. Instead of God hearing and answering prayer, prayer is said to work a change in our hearts,* and to conform our will to that of God. Instead of going to heaven or hell, the consequences of virtue are described in the joy and peace of the heart obedient to God, and of vice in the pangs and remorse of a guilty conscience. Instead of throwing ourselves at the feet of Jesus, and being sprinkled with His blood, and being clothed with His righteousness, we are told that we must by sympathy with the spirit of Christ, and in conformity with what he requires of his disciples, strive to overcome all temptations, and to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. Many other illustrations may occur to you, and the Unitarian *tendency* is to this extreme, exclusive of the other.

"This weakening tendency was at one time so strong within me, that I hardly thought it was right for us to be called Christians. Christianity I thought was one of many spiritual influences, the most powerful and the holiest. The object of Christ's life was to do and to bear the will of God; and by sympathy with such a life I imagined that we also might be assisted, greatly assisted, to do and to bear that Will in our lives. It was by awakening this desire to live in harmony with the divine will, and not by calling disciples to follow Him, and look to Him, and devote

* Very many Unitarians would quite repudiate any such limited statement as this, believing in prayer and its answer as strongly as Travers did.

themselves to Him, that I thought Christ sought to save the world; and hence it seemed to me a departure from the Christian spirit to call ourselves by the name of Christ. It was, as I thought, Christian sectarianism, which sprung up with the apostles. It almost amuses me to write these thoughts, so light and idle are they; and I am thankful to say so entirely *past.* But I fear the tendency to this extreme still exists amongst many Unitarians; and nothing but the saddest individual experience, the deepest conviction of sin, and the feeling of utter worthlessness and nothingness unless converted and saved by some power from without, will ever lead them to throw themselves at the foot of the cross, to receive the salvation which Jesus brings, and to be 'washed in the blood of the Lamb.' And if ever we are to have power to convert others, I am persuaded that it must be in this, by preaching Christ and him crucified, and calling on all men to look to him that they may be healed. The moment they look, and look with faith, all their past transgressions are blotted out. If they were to die, they would be accepted, and go—like the thief—to paradise. If they live, they will start on a fresh course; their spirits will be renewed; they will be clothed with a righteousness not their own, but which comes *to* them—a healing, sanctifying power—as long as they look and pray in faith, and is taken from them as soon as ever they trust in themselves. Most wonderful are the messages and revelations streaming to us from the cross. The self-denying, self-sacrificing love, and perfect devotion to the will of God, which should dwell in the hearts of all the followers of the cross, is one,—the overflowing love of God for all His children, even those who have most wickedly rebelled against him, in sparing not his well-beloved Son, is another,—to me the most powerful, most constraining of all the influences by which man is reconciled to God. The perfect and inviolable sanctity of that law which demanded precepts so heart-searching and thorough as are given in the Sermon on the Mount, and in every part of the gospel—an example so pure and spotless as is seen in the life of Christ—a sacrifice so great, and a ransom so precious, as was offered in his death, in order that it might be known and obeyed—this revelation of God's justice, and holiness, and

hatred of sin, is another most solemn and awful revelation of the cross. The wrath of God is not at variance with His love, neither does His justice contend against His mercy:—that justice must be satisfied, that wrath must be appeased. The sinner knows it, and feels it; and when he sees—in the life and death of Christ; in the very plan by which God's justice is satisfied, and His wrath appeased—His infinite love and mercy shining direct upon his own soul, he can no longer resist its influence. Then it is, when love is seen shining forth from the midst of wrath, and mercy from justice, that its poweris infinite to cast down and to build up, to destroy the old and to create the new.

"One other message I hear; but I would through life sit at the foot of the cross, and hear many, many more;—what must be the value of the soul for which such a sacrifice has been made, such a ransom paid, such boundless love displayed? And what ardent zeal should fill the minds of all disciples of Christ, for the conversion of the souls of those for whom he died?"

Alas, that sad break in the middle of the letter shews that even these new thoughts had not, any more than those of his previous religious life, the power to "enable one to pass through the season of fiercest struggle." These times of darkness were too closely connected with physical weakness and prostration, to be prevented or cured by any change of the religious faith which, at all other times, alike in his earlier as in his later life, was so bright and strong, and full of sweet trust in God.

Those who were intimately acquainted with him after this time know, what indeed his very letters shew, that even *now* the "thorn in the flesh" did not depart from him, but still came upon him as it had done before, still breaking down his plans of service,

ever wearing him into illness, and ageing him long before his time. It is, indeed, true that his new faith, when these times had passed by, enabled him to get beyond them, helped him to the peace of new onward life, something more readily than had been the case before, and therein I for one rejoice,—thinking, nevertheless, that his earlier faith was truer than his later.

Apart, however, from the question of how far these changed thoughts helped him in these peculiar struggles, which, as has been said, arose largely from physical constitution, they became inexpressibly dear to him. In his letters he constantly dwelt upon them. The love of Christ and his sacrifice for sin; the love of God in sending Christ to save sinners, of whom he, too, like Paul, felt himself to be "chief," sometimes quite overpowered him. "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb. *Therefore* are they before the throne of God." These deep words, better than any others, pourtray his faith in, or rather, perhaps, *sense of* the Atonement. From this time forth such thoughts took hold of his heart, with an intensity he had never felt before.

As was natural in these dawnings of new thought, he begins to find friendship and sympathy among the more earnest and spiritual in the other churches about him. He writes to one of his old friends in Manchester, formerly a scholar but at this time a teacher at the Lower Mosley Street Schools:—

"*Norwich, March 18th,* 1851.

"I told you I was getting amongst the church clergymen here. There are several here who were pupils or friends of Dr. Arnold, whose name, I think, you must have heard, and whose life I should like us some day to read together. I took a walk with one of them yesterday. He has established evening classes in his parish; and holds a prayer meeting every week in conjunction with, and even at the houses of Dissenters. He is also a friend to universal suffrage; and he has asked me to meet Thomas Cooper at his house to-morrow. His influence in his parish, which is one of the poorest here, seems very good. He has done away with all church fees at marriage, and the consequence is that last Sunday he published the banns of marriage of three couples who ought to have been married long since. I have been seeing something of the Independents also, and of the Primitive Methodists, and reading and thinking a good deal on what it is to be a Christian, and what our duties as Christians are. There is a great deal more implied in becoming a Christian than I used to imagine, but I cannot begin to write my thoughts on this subject now. With all their faults, it appears to me that the Primitive Methodists keep more directly in view the object which a Christian church ought to have, than any other denomination. They seek the lowest, and roughest, and hardest, and bring them under the power of religion."

More even than in Primitive Methodism, Travers rejoices in broad, unsectarian brotherhood. The minister at the old "Octagon Chapel" in Norwich, where the Unitarians worship, was a man of like spirit with himself, and had many friends outside his own body,—among others one Rev. Philip Bland, the incumbent of one of the city churches; and great is Travers's rejoicing when this clergyman, feeling the harmfulness of the common restrictions upon ministerial interchange, consents to preach in the Unitarian Chapel:—

"*Norwich, March 28th,* 1851.

"I think I told you, in my last letter, that a clergyman in this city was going to preach at our chapel last Sunday evening. It was mentioned at the close of the morning service, and there was a very large congregation in the evening. It was a bold thing of him to do, and I fear that he will get into trouble for it, but you would have been greatly interested if you had heard him; and more than interested, for I have seldom heard (if ever) more faithful and earnest preaching. Even if he is prevented from doing so again, he will have borne his public testimony to our being fellow-workers and fellow-disciples with him. How much more would Christianity prevail, if there was this good spirit uniting the various sects!"

By and by we find him doing something more than merely finding friendship outside of his old religious associations:—

"*Gorleston, May 10th,* 1851.

"I told you in my last that I was going to preach again. It seemed something quite new and strange to me after my long silence, and I feel as little disposed as ever to press into this work. It is a work for which one ought to prepare, and one which ought to be supported, by a pure and earnest life.

"I will now tell you about the various services into which I have been led to take a part beyond my expectation. The Independent minister here being ill, I preached at the Mariners' Chapel in Yarmouth, yesterday week, also in his own chapel on Sunday evening. The congregation was large and attentive, and there seemed so much interest amongst the people, that it was thought well to have special services during the week. One on Monday night for the purpose of encouraging and strengthening the members of the church, and another on Thursday night with a view to lead those who were doubting and inquiring, to determine to give their hearts to God. The Monday evening meeting was very much of a prayer meeting, with addresses from the minister and myself. The Thursday evening meeting was more

of a regular service, and was more numerously attended. As there were many there of the class for whom it was specially intended, I hope some good has been done. One more Sunday I shall spend among these united and devoted people; but with the exception of speaking to the scholars a little in the afternoon, I shall keep quiet for the rest of my time."

Among these Churchmen, and Methodists, and Independents, were formed many of the friendships which gave their colour to his after life, and endured with only deepening tenderness to his death.

THE OLD TIES OF WORK LOOSENING.

It was in the early days of 1850 that Travers had been obliged to give up work in Manchester, and return to Norwich to recruit his feeble and shattered health. For many weeks he was unable to make any exertion. "I have to spend my time," he sorrowfully writes, "in sleeping, eating, and doing nothing." It will be easily understood how hard a trial this was to him. He was always a bad patient: never would give himself time to get thoroughly well; and now, as many another time, returned to his work long before he was fit for it. At the end of April he went to London, on his way to Manchester, and wrote thence to his "dear brother Nat," the Nathaniel Dumville to whom reference has been made, in Manchester.

"*London, April 20th*, 1850.

"After many struggles with my friends, I have at last succeeded in getting what I want, and that is to return to Manchester. I shall come to-morrow by the train that leaves London at 10, and, I believe, reaches Manchester at 4 30. I am quite well and strong again, no thanks to the doctors, of whom I have reason to think worse than ever! I have had to fight my vegetarian battle against *every one;* but I believe I am on the right side, and certainly if I had yielded, I could not have got much sooner well. I had a capital letter from —— —— which I will shew you when I return. It is plain good sense, instead of all the

nonsense that doctors talk about meat and porter and drugs, together with visits to Cheltenham and the Continent. More sleep and exercise is all that I shall want, and not so much work; so I suppose that after my day's work is done, I must be content to leave the school very much to itself, and take things easily for a little time. The summer weather is coming, and we will have beautiful country walks. Oh! how I rejoice at the thought of being at the school to-morrow night. Good-by, dear Nat; and may God give us a happy meeting to-morrow.

"Ever your affectionate,

"TRAVERS MADGE."

Our readers have got by this time some idea of what "taking it easily" meant to Travers, and it is, therefore, little surprise to find him, in a few months, again dating from his Norwich home, where returning illness has once more forced him to take refuge; and writing sadly, "It will probably be many months before I return to live in Manchester. I cannot think of our long separation as quietly as I ought to do, though I know that all is for the best." Of those many months of feeble convalescence, there is not much to tell. There was a short visit to London, the occasion of his meeting Mr. Lalor, and of the conversation mentioned in the long letter to Franklin Howorth, which has been given already. London, however, never had much charm for him. "Dear Nat," he writes from Norwich, on February 22nd, 1851, just after his return thither, "you cannot tell what a joy it is to me to be here again quiet and at home."

"I always seem to lose myself in London, so entirely different is the life there from what I am used to, and one's very religion seems to become a religion of the world. As I said once before, the temptations and snares which always beset me are greater

there than anywhere. I had a sad time of it with the exception of the last few days, and hope that it will be long before I go there again. Two or three days before I left, I went to Mr. Henry Enfield's, at Hampstead, which is close to London, and those days were not lost. I suppose that we ought not to be so much influenced by the conversation and character of those around us; but I do find the easy, worldly, respectable religion of some Christians, the greatest *damper* of my own religious feelings that I ever experience. All one's more earnest thoughts and inward struggles and heavenly desires seem to be quenched. So that I cannot help feeling that if we call ourselves Christians, and do not earnestly *seek after* the *highest* Christian life, we are doing more injury to those around us than if we had never taken the name of Christ. A respectable, worldly religion is, in its influence on others like the cold and clammy hand of death. Let me have all the noise and vehemence of the Methodists, if only it be *sincere*, rather than this. We cannot indeed be *perfect* Christians, but if we are in earnest, ever seeking something higher and better than we have yet reached, we may feel sure that God's blessing is upon us, and that we are helping His work in the hearts of others."

For a while, also, he was at Gorleston, at Mr. Septimus Dowson's, the brother of his Norwich friend, amidst a quiet, happy circle, where he was always very intimate and very dear. Sometimes we have notes of his reading, still loving most to dwell on the lives of those strong and faithful servants of God, whose fearless, unresting, apostolic work he longed to share:—

Norwich, March 21st, 1851.

"I have lately been reading some histories of monks and missionaries, who lived more than a thousand years ago, and who spread Christianity in what were then the heathen countries of England and Ireland, Germany, Prussia, &c. It is wonderful to read of what they went through, and how, like apostles, they gave their whole souls and lives to the work they were engaged

in. It is not necessary to leave our own country, or even our daily employments, but the history of such men as these makes one feel what a half-and-half sort of life one leads—good enough to give one a respectable character in the world, but altogether unworthy of the name and cause by which we call ourselves. Just think if Peter and James and John and Paul had "taken it as easy" as we do now-a-days. How many converts would they have made? And where would Christianity have been? Well, dear Nat, I have very unintentionally slipped into a sermon after all. But I cannot help it; and this will come to you on Saturday night, a time I am very fond of. The end of the week, and the thoughts that will come with it; the approaching Sunday, and the thoughts belonging to *it;* the half-holiday and the all being together, make it at once a serious and a joyful time. I can see you all at tea, not one is forgotten."

And again, the following week :—

"I have been reading a life of Luther this week, and some of his writings. I had no conception before what a mind and character his was. If ever you fall ill, and are *forced* to be idle, I think you will find with me that it is not all a misfortune, or even an affliction."

Nor is Manchester ever forgotten. As he waits at Norwich, still resting, hoping for stronger health, no thoughts recur to him more frequently than the memories of that Manchester life, and all its busy work. He thinks of all the meetings and the classes, and of those whom he had been trying to win to religion. It is in his heart to make that school there in Lower Mosley Street a full and perfect work, and he thus writes his thoughts and hopes for it :—

"*Norwich, February 28th,* 1851.

"I have long wished that our school might be not only a benefit to the scholars, but to the immediate neighbourhood; and though we have met with little success I do not feel at all inclined

to despair. I know that our duties to the scholars are our *first*, and those to the neighbours our *secondary* ones. I know that the latter must never be allowed to interfere with the former; but if evening classes, the library, temperance meetings, evening services, and tract visiting can give us any influence in the neighbourhood, I think we ought not to let them go. I was thinking of this, and intending to do all I could with the help of others, when I left. I thought we might have cottage services, and since I have been here I have been often thinking how we might do the greatest amount of work in this way with the least amount ot labour. Now our visiting plan is a most useful preparation. If it is persevered with, we shall far more easily be able to carry out these higher objects. It is a very quiet sort of work; it is one which shows no great results. But it is one which must necessarily do good. If we only go to deliver tracts, and never say a word, we do good. It is not a little thing to give something to be read on the Sunday, by those who are living in the constant sight and hearing of what is wretched and vile. Our tracts are read by those who would read no others, and is that a small success? Supposing you and I went to no school, and no chapel; that in our home we heard continually cursing and filthy conversation; that away from our home we were working in the midst of the same sounds, or were spending our time in public-houses, casinos, races, &c. What might not be the influence of reading some tract Sunday after Sunday, speaking words of earnest truth, or containing some tale with a moral, bearing hard upon ourselves? And what might not be the unseen influence exerted by those who brought us the tracts? I think I should begin to feel kindly towards them, and perhaps even wish to follow their example in the course of time. Tract distributing (if our tracts are good) appears to me very useful in itself; but when it is combined with conversation or connected with cottage meetings and services, may become infinitely more so. It is quiet, humble, patient, persevering Christian work, sowing the seed, and trusting to God to give the increase. It is very cheap. It requires no more time than we ought cheerfully to give. But if it interferes with any duty towards the school, let it be abandoned. Though we do not make any teetotallers by our tracts, we know

not what good our weekly visits may do. We ought not to *wish* to know. But I often felt cheered by the kindly welcome given us; and if every other district is given up, I still hope that some one will continue mine till I return."

A little later—the end of April—his health being greatly restored, he is looking forward to returning thither in a few days, and tells the same Manchester friend the plans he has been cogitating for his life there:

"*Gorleston, April 25th,* 1851.

"I have just read your letter again, and find that you want to know what I shall do when I return. I am intending to commence early morning classes as soon as I can get any number of pupils together. I hope I shall be able in this way just to earn enough to support myself. Preparation for the classes, looking over exercises, and other business will occupy me from breakfast to dinner. The afternoons and evenings I hope to give to my own reading and writing, visiting scholars, classes, and meetings at the school; and occasionally to visiting schools, &c., in the neighbourhood. If I can have my afternoons and evenings free for school and missionary work, I hope I shall not have to go again without my rest. If I continue as well as I am now, you may be sure of seeing me at the time I mentioned, for I never was better or stronger in my life, and so very brown and ruddy that I am afraid you will all laugh at me."

It may seem strange to those who have just read, in the last chapter, of the views and sympathies which had been growing up in his mind during this long retirement, that he did not at once give up working among Unitarians, and join himself to some one of the orthodox churches. To Travers's mind, however, there appeared no necessity for any such change. He knew that his old Unitarian friends at Lower Mosley

Street would listen to him as gladly and earnestly as ever; and that he should have a fair hearing for whatever seemed most important to his mind, whether it was in accordance with their own previous views or not. If their faith seemed to him to lack something of the power and beauty of Christianity, he knew that at any rate they were sincerely anxious it should not so lack; and, therefore, the more need for him to continue with them, and try to bring them to see what seemed to him so true and so helpful. Thus he had no thought but of going back to them, and he went back; and for six or seven years afterwards, whenever his health permitted intervals of return to Manchester, he still retained his connection with the old school. Gradually, indeed, he experienced something of restraint in regard to the matters on which he felt most deeply, not arising from any word of hinderance to his freest speech ever coming from his friends there, but from the sense on his own part of a certain lack of sympathy, as he found that he failed to convince them of his new views. Ultimately, therefore, as we shall see, though not till after some years, he preferred to take up a work among those who thought and felt more as he did. But even then, he owned the reality of the freedom which he had found among his old Unitarian friends. He never took up the cant of Unitarianism being "dangerous," as if any honest thought could peril a man's soul with the Great Infinite Father. He thought they were wrong, that they "missed something of the beauty of Christianity," that was how he expressed it; but he always continued

to think of them as fellow-Christians. His change of views never raised up even the shadow of estrangement between him and his old friends:—to the last he let his name remain on the roll of the Provincial Assembly—the union of the old "English Presbyterian" churches of Lancashire and Cheshire, which are now virtually Unitarian, though they do not universally adopt the name; and once and again, both at its annual gathering, and at the meetings of the Sunday School Association of the same churches, he spoke in words of heartiest greeting, and renewed the religious fellowships of his earlier years.

A friend who was among those who met him at the railway station, on the Saturday evening of this return to Manchester, in 1851, has described the scene to me as a very touching one. It had got noised about in the school that he was coming, and without any pre-arrangement, by the mere spontaneous longing to set eyes on him again, nearly the whole school, and many of the poor from the district about it in which he was so well known, were assembled to welcome him. The station was nearly full of them; and when he got out of the carriage, the scene was something not to be forgotten. There was no cheering, instinctively all felt that any such demonstration would be simply painful to him; but there was an eager, affectionate closing about him, and many hands held out for his, and many eyes glistening with thankful joy! No! he certainly need never be in any fear lest such friends as these should refuse to hear whatever might be in his heart to say to them. So he once again

began his old life; with them at the schools nearly all the Sunday through, teaching and preaching with the same simple, pleading fervour as before; and every spare hour in the week going about among their homes, cheering the sick, or looking after some poor, tempted, wavering scholar, whom he longed to save from the snares of that hard, city life.

It was again a happy life to him. And yet already he began to find his new tendencies of thought raising up a vague, indefinable sense of separation between him and his old friends,—a barrier of argument rather than of overt disagreement, but still a hinderance to the perfectly free working of his old fervent sympathy. He writes, after one of their week-night religious meetings:—

"*July 25th*, 1851.

"At our meeting last night some remark was made on parts of my Sunday evening sermon, which has set me thinking. I believe I spoke a truth, because I have felt it so strongly; but it seems difficult to reconcile all truths together, and make a consistent whole. I had been thought to preach what is called rather *hard* doctrine, hard to live up to, I mean. So last Sunday I endeavoured to speak more of the encouragements which we receive in the gospel. I spoke of the growth we must make, and that we must not expect to start with perfection in our Christian course. I also spoke of the power of God over our hearts, and said that upon every one of us who had heard and obeyed the call to follow Christ, God had laid His hand, and would not let us go back into the ways of sin. We are not left alone to struggle against sin; 'the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth,' and that power restrains us from sin, and reclaims us if we go astray. I might have said that this had been all taught me—wonderfully, providentially. I have tried to go off from God; I have trampled upon his laws; I have

despised his love; I have done what I dare not name, in direct opposition and enmity to Him, and yet He will not suffer me to be lost. He has called me; He has shielded me from danger at one time; at another, in the midst of danger and despair, He has stretched out His hand to save me. I feel as if nothing stood between me and God. If I were to attempt to forsake Him again, His almighty power would again be exerted to rescue and save me. And He who sent His own Son for that very purpose would move the mightiest things in creation, as if they were but a feather, rather than suffer me to go into everlasting ruin. This is the power which I know and feel is over me, and it is the consciousness and conviction of this which serves to strengthen, settle, stablish me. There is no encouragement in heaven or earth to be compared to it. It is to me the greatest reality, the most felt and living truth of the gospel, that which makes it the power of God unto my salvation. I did not say this on Sunday night; but the thing itself, the truth, though not with its reference to myself, I did declare.

"But I fear I have got such a half and weakly grasp of this truth and many others, that I do not make them clear. Besides, there is evident difficulty in reconciling it with our free agency, and I do not attempt it. It was thought to be Calvinistic. But all I could say was, that if it were so we should soon meet, in the writings of Paul, with things a thousand times more Calvinistic than anything I had said."

And again, a few weeks later, in a long and deeply-interesting letter to his Norwich home, he at once describes more fully his own changing thoughts on these matters, and alludes to this indefinable sense of restraint among his old Manchester friends which was gradually stealing over him :—

"*Manchester, August* 15*th*, 1851.

"Of late, every kind of sin has appeared to me to be infinitely more horrible and hateful than ever before. I was inclined at one time to think rather lightly of the sins we commit. I was

for excusing them on the plea of ignorance or difficulty in overcoming them; or their not meaning so much of inward evil, as they might appear to mean. But the neglect of talents which we *do* possess, the violation of the moral law with which we *are* acquainted, the wilful preference of darkness to that degree of light which *actually has* shone upon us, and our ingratitude to God, seem to me sins of the darkest hue, and all but universal. I was preaching about the last, ingratitude to God, on Sunday morning. 'Every good gift and every perfect is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.' How little constantly grateful do we feel, and how we prove our ingratitude by wasting the good gifts of God, or turning them to our own destruction. Life, leisure time, opportunities for instruction and worship, perhaps the gift of song, which should be all devoted to Him who gives them, perverted into so many instruments of evil, destroying the work of God in our own souls, and the souls of our fellow-creatures. The more I dwell upon the boundless and tender mercies of God, the more it seems as if this one—want of thought of Him, of gratitude to Him, and of faith in Him—call it what you will—is the greatest sin which we His children can be guilty of. The most heinous sins, as they appear outwardly, are not so fearful to look at, as one inward glance at this separation from God, this want of faith and love and gratitude, from which they all proceed. Myself has made me feel all this, and I think any one's real self must have the same lesson to teach; but it is also continually forced upon me by the life that is led here, except by 'the boys'—a life of waste and folly, a life, as far as one can see, literally without God. Do you not think it is more of this which we, who have been brought up among Unitarians, want to feel? The dead weight of such sin as this pressing heavily upon us, and making us constantly seek for a Deliverer, will bring us to Christ. But Christ will never be felt as a Saviour, unless we feel that we are going headlong to ruin without Him—weaving our own destruction every moment of our lives. I am inclined to think that the preliminary preaching, 'Repent ye,' is what we now want; and when we are casting about in despair for something to lay hold of, then will be time enough to speak of the redemption which may be found in Jesus Christ. This is

one point where I feel tongue-tied amongst Unitarians. *If* I say that we are poor, undone, lost, miserable sinners, I shall not be believed; I shall be thought to be speaking beyond the truth, and the consciences of the comfortable, good-natured people who form our congregations, will not answer to the charge. They will perhaps object to such language altogether, and yet until my heart knows what it is to groan and travail under sin, every word which speaks of Christ's mission to the sinful will be a dead letter, and Christ himself can hardly be *felt* to be a Saviour or Redeemer, whatever he may be *called.*

"Oh, if it were possible to give myself wholly to this one, one work of preaching and teaching the great doctrine of salvation by Jesus Christ! Dear, dear M——, week passes after week, and still the same account to render. 'What have you (I mean I) done in this work?' Nil, nil—always nil. *You* are ill and weak: God in His infinite love, although we know not why, has made you so; and thankful must you always feel when he gives you any opportunity of doing good, and eager to avail yourself of it. But he has given *me* health and strength. I am able to go anywhere, and am continually called to do something towards bringing the lost and dying souls of men to Him who came to seek and save them. And yet I never do, never have done, *any* thing. I fear I am falling into the same strain as I did last week, but I cannot help it. Nothing seems really to answer. Our classes and services do not seem to prosper:—no increase of union, devotion, and love: no increase of numbers coming amongst us; and the exertion and efforts which had been made during my absence seem to be dying out, so that I have nearly all the talk to myself again. I often think I should be well out of their way. Our evening services have now been carried on for two or three years without interruption; but few of the parents come, only those who came at first, and they only irregularly.

"And so, dearest, I have again poured out my complaints, and you must forgive me. Is it all selfishness and pride, to wish for the heaven it would be to see a soul that *we* have converted and brought to the Saviour and to God? Perhaps it is; and, therefore, God keeps us low down in the valley!"

How very gradually, indeed, this sense of restraint grew up, how utterly unchanged was the feeling of those about him towards him, and how they still responded to the old influence of his appeals, the following letter of a month later shews :—

"*Manchester, September* 13*th*, 1851.

"Last Sunday we began what I think will be of great use amongst us. There seemed to be a want of something to unite together those of the parents and others, who attend our evening services but none of our more quiet and social or devotional meetings. I have tried to promote more union and steadiness of attendance at the services, and congregational feeling; and last Sunday night I preached upon being one with each other and with God and Christ. "As Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." After this we had a prayer meeting, to which a good many stayed, and which, I think, we shall all wish to repeat at the beginning of each month. Certainly we must be very different from what we were, to be able to have such a meeting, and a very happy one it was."

A fortnight after he is laid up with a slight attack of illness, and writes, characteristically every way :—

"*Manchester, September* 26*th*, 1851.

"I am *almost delighting* as much as Master (*i. e.* Mr. Dowson) would in an attack of cholera, which keeps me quiet. It has been ready to come for some days, and I am glad to be getting over it. For the last few weeks I have spent little time at home, and I have greatly felt the want of the reading and quiet thought which I had previously allowed myself. In a weary, wicked world like this, something of the kind seems necessary to keep up one's faith and courage, and save one from floating with the stream. It may seem strange to you to speak of a weary, wicked world, whilst you are in such a bright and happy home; but what is the truth? I know there is 'kindly sympathy,' 'common humanity.' But what a sprinkling is there, amongst so many, of those who crucify

the flesh, and live to God! Every day I am more deeply impressed with the wretched state of the world, and with the worthlessness of all the thoughts and deeds of a heart not one with God. Everything done from love to God, and for the sake of Christ, is a precious and acceptable offering; but *a soul where God is not, is a dark and dreary blank.* I must confess that I have of late been sorely and bitterly tempted to go with the multitude; but I trust that God has once more restored my soul. I cannot tell. I spent yesterday chiefly with St. Paul—the 8th of Romans—and it was the power and comfort of God to me. But I long at such times for you, or to go to some of the chapels where Christ is preached as the Physician and Saviour of one's soul. It seems to be my duty to help and work with those at school, or else sometimes I hunger and thirst for something I cannot get there."

That eighth chapter of Romans was, thenceforth, of all the scriptures, the part that shone with the intensest light of meaning to him. In his letters he constantly alludes to it. About this time he was at Burrow Hall—Mr. S. Alcock's—for a few days, among a circle of dear old friends gathered there for the summer holiday, when the question of the comparative value of some of St. Paul's writings came up, and we have an interesting little glimpse of the discussion. He had alluded to the very defective characterisation of St. Paul, in a work which had just appeared:—

"*Manchester, August 29th,* 1851.

"I had the book with me at Mrs. Alcock's, and mentioned this deficiency; and went on to say that if one chapter out of all the Epistles was left, whilst all the rest were destroyed, the one I would retain would be the 8th chapter of Romans. There was a general outcry at this. My father said not one in a hundred thousand knew what it meant. He begged for 1st of Corinthians, xv. Mr. Robberds wanted some chapters of St. James, and

Mrs. Robberds 1st Corinthians, xiii. Nevertheless, I stick to my text. After the Gospel of St. John especially, it contains all that I want. The soul of practical Godliness,—the help and workings of the spirit,—our adoption by God,—our assurance of His love to give us all things freely, seeing that He has already given us His own Son,—our complete victory over the world, its sorrows, temptations, and everything that would attempt to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus; and in every line and letter of it the manifest proof that it is written by one who knows the inmost struggles of the heart, through and through and through, and has groaned with groanings that cannot be uttered."

The gradual development of his thoughts in this direction, forms indeed a large element in his letters henceforth. It is peculiarly interesting to read of these workings of his mind, while he yet stood on the indefinable border-land between his old Unitarian friends, and the new associations of his later religious life. We see every gradation of the change. The two phases of Christian thought are compared together by one whom we feel to have been actuated by the devoutest love of truth, and come naturally into a close juxtaposition, which brings out their strength or weakness in a most suggestive and instructive way. In October of this same year, he has been reading a sermon which had just been published, and thus bursts out about it :—

"How strange that Mr. M. can say in that new sermon of his, that we have passed the thought and want of salvation. Redemption is as much a thing of the past (so I understand him) as the old outward law; and gratitude to a Deliverer has yielded to something higher, I forget what. I could follow him no more. Oh, if such words should have fallen on the bleeding heart of her who bathed the feet of Jesus with her tears, and wiped them with

the hairs of her head! Thank God, that of this woman also it may be said, that wherever the gospel is preached, this shall be told as a memorial of her, and the precious words which the Saviour spoke, 'to whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much.' Would he, if once again amongst men, no more be able to say, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captive, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, and preach the acceptable year of the Lord.' I feel as if those words that I spoke of above were the most distinct disavowal of the essence of Christianity, and yet the most honest confession of the general state of the Unitarian mind that I ever met with. As I have not read the whole sermon, I may have judged the author wrongly, but if I have a right understanding of him, from the few words I have read, I cannot but look on such preaching as that as utterly anti-Christian. Most earnestly do I hope that the Unitarian reviews of the sermon will lay hold on this point, and that Unitarians generally may be roused by it to defend and more deeply value the great purpose of Christ and Christianity, to seek and save them that are lost."

Only a few weeks later, however, we find him at Liverpool, where he calls on another minister of this same body, from which he has been growing more and more out of spiritual harmony; a minister who would be usually regarded as much more fairly representative of average Unitarian thought than the one on whose sermon he thus commented, and he finds himself in closest sympathy with him.

"I called on Mr. T——. There we stayed an hour or two, having the most perfect, spiritual, heavenly conversation. He is a man who I should think could never for a moment harbour any but the purest thoughts—almost all spirit. It was a real comfort to find how much more of positive Christianity he retains than many modern thinkers. He spoke of having no sympathy with

some of their views. He is filled with a spirit of reverential truth and faith. It would be a wonderful support to have communion with such a man. It was *perfect* that morning,—truly like heaven."

This same visit to Liverpool brings us a brief mention of another good man, of a spirit kindred to that of Travers—the great apostle of Temperance.

"*Manchester, November 29th*, 1851.

"On Wednesday I went to Mr. Rathbone's, and spent the whole night there. Father Matthew was there, and his secretary who accompanied him to Norwich. His brother also and a nephew; Russell Carpenter, and some members of the family. Poor Father Matthew is not what he was. He has had two paralytic strokes in America. Once when he was administering Mass, he fell down. He walks very feebly, and in general sits very quiet, without speaking a word. Still, I believe, his mind is not really impaired; and his kind and simple heart still shews itself in his face. He works as hard as ever in the Temperance cause:—the day before he left America spending nine hours in administering the pledge. He intends to come to Liverpool and Manchester in the spring. He is no longer going to live by himself, but with his brother. The reverence of his family for him is very striking. Mr. Rathbone spoke to me as having been very much impressed by it. His chief enemies are the Catholic priests, who cannot tolerate his liberality. He wants me very much to go to Cork in the summer, where he says I shall have a 'thousand welcomes.'"

These were a few happy months, happy in the intercourse with such friends, happy in labours of usefulness, not only at his beloved schools, but in many places beside. Now we find him preaching for the Manchester Town Mission, now for a little band of Congregational Methodists, meeting in a humble room. Now and again he is spending a Sunday among his

old friends at Padiham, Newchurch, and Clover Street, Rochdale. Again, the little record of his preaching, which is before me as I write, tells of humble services in cottages in the dense, poor quarters, where the Lower Mosley Street scholars mostly lived. Just now, too, new leisure came to him ; he seems to have given up his miscellaneous classes, a single tutorship providing for a time the few necessaries of his simple life, and leaving him a freedom which, except in the listlessness of sickness, he had not known for many years. I cannot but quote the whole long letter, in which he poured out to his Norwich friends the feelings of thankfulness and encouragement, and all the hopes and plans for his happy school work, which were in his heart.

"*Manchester, October* 7th, 1851.

"I promised myself the happiness of writing to you, as one of the first acts of my 'perfect freedom.' My first thoughts and thankfulness flow naturally to God, and then to you; and, indeed, I do thank God that I am now once more able to give my whole time and thought and life to the work to which He seems to have called me. Yes, dearest, you know what reason I have to be thankful for the years through which I have passed;—for the business habits, and method in thought and action which I so sadly needed before, and hope I have now somewhat learned;—for the better control of my thoughts, and the higher sense of the value of time, even of minutes, and the need of its careful regulation;—for the power of attention and fixing my mind on a given subject, till I can think it to the bottom;—for the very sickness to which overwork brought me;—for the bright vision of God and the Saviour which has appeared to me in the dark valley of the shadow of death and despair, and for the clearer and yet more solemn conception of the duties that lie before me. All this has been the teaching of God. Sad and terrible indeed has been the ordeal through which he has led me; and now continually He

reminds me, that the moment I leave go of Him, I fall into a perfect hell of misery and sin. There is now no resting place between. To serve God, and to live with Him and in Him, is heaven; to forget Him, or to swerve the least from entire devotion to His will, is to open one's heart to all doubts and fears, frailties and sins, and bitterest pangs of hell. *With* God there is safety, peace, eternal settled joy; without God there is nothing for us but sorrow and despair, weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. I feel this to the uttermost; and now that God has once more relieved me from every earthly care and occupation, Oh may He protect me from the snares and temptations which gather round so free a life, and help me to present my whole self, body and soul, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to Him. Forgive me, dearest, thus much about myself:—at such a time as this I am forced within. This is my first morning. Yesterday I had to spend with my pupil at the college, where I am glad to say he has obtained admission. Now it is left for me to decide upon how these mornings shall be spent. Four hours every day I shall have entirely to myself,—a thing so new, that I hardly know which way first to turn. What studies shall I take up? First of all, I think of spending an hour or so in the study of the Scriptures, and books of devotion. Several hours, too, I shall need for preparation of my services. These will be spent chiefly in the country. Then what shall I do? Shall I pursue my German, which I have lately been compelled quite to lay aside? I think I shall give an hour a day to it, and then what else? I think a thorough and complete study of the Evidences of Christianity will occupy my time fully, and for the present most profitably. In reading the Scriptures I shall constantly have in view preparation for different classes, &c. There is our Thursday evening class, with the epistles of St. Paul. I have very carefully prepared for these meetings ever since I returned, and they have been quite a new thing. With some discouragements occasionally, they have continued to increase in profit and interest, and the attendance also has increased. On Wednesdays, for the future, I shall always spend an hour with a young man, one of our elder scholars, who has passed through the instructions of the school, and yet says that he is almost

ignorant of anything in the Scripture, even the gospels. He is now paralytic, and though his general health is good, he can never come to school. He has never given his mind to religion, although he has always been attentive and well-conducted. But he was much interested in the Selections from Fenelon, which I left him with a desire that he would read carefully and speak to me about when I called. Now we shall, on occasion of my weekly visits, read the gospels together. Then there is the teachers' class on Sunday. We have just finished the Life of Christ, and shall now pass on to the Acts of the Apostles. They now quite willingly fall into the plan of giving up all writing and arithmetic, and spending the whole time in reading. We shall thus have time to read books on Sunday school teaching, &c. I do not know anything that has given me greater encouragement than this. When I first returned, the suggestion was immediately rejected. Last Sunday, with one or two exceptions, it was gladly received. I wish you could have been with us on Sunday evening. We had our prayer meeting again, and most delightful it was. The old people could have stayed there for ever, they said: and not the old only, for the younger ones seem equally to like it. Mr. Howorth, who had been preaching at Altrincham, came in at the close of the service, and stayed with us for about a quarter of an hour, and opened our prayer meeting. It seemed like a father's blessing, and he went away full of joy himself. My heart is full of many things, but it must come to an end now."

Alas, alas, for all those bright anticipations of study and happy work! Alas for the full heart and the busy hands! Within a few weeks, his strength, overwrought, had given way, his health and spirits had broken down together, and, before Christmas came,—a feeble, shattered, almost broken-hearted man,—he had left Manchester once more, and closed with sad abruptness another chapter in his life.

BROKEN YEARS: 1852–8.

For years after that sudden breaking down, at once of his health and work, at the close of 1851, our friend's life was little more than a series of weary illnesses, alternating with fitful gleams of feeble health. Of all those years, a few fragments were all that he could gather up for work; a few fragments are all that we can gather up for record. The gaps between the entries in his little preaching diary, tell a sad tale of longing eagerness to be up and doing, of broken hopes and dispiriting relapses into sickness. Throughout 1852, there seems to have been not a single Sunday on which he could preach: in 1853, six Sundays, at intervals, in June, July and August; then another long gap lasting till March, 1854. During parts of the interval he was wandering from place to place, breathing the fresh country air in Devonshire, Cornwall, and Wales. He always loved the country. The quiet, and fresh air, and beautiful scenery, seemed to do him more good than anything else. Though generally alone, solitude under those circumstances seemed to have none of the depressing effects which it so often had in his lonely town lodgings; and when he craved for society, he could find it in every way-side cottage, or with any wayfarer whom he found going the same

road as himself. In many a cottage home he left traces of these brief visits, in the impressions for good which his earnest homely words made—bad habits given up, the Bible read as it had not been read for years, and families gathered together for prayer. Poor people, with whom he lodged a night or two, have written to him since as if he had been their only friend; and children whom he met with in those days, will remember him to their dying day. Unknown to himself, he left a track of light wherever he went.

In June, 1852, we have a glimpse of him at Bideford. He had come thither a stranger, and had to pass a Sunday there.

"I have not yet told you how much I enjoyed my Sunday at Bideford, amongst some people who meet simply as brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and from Sunday to Sunday round the table of the Lord. They permitted me to join them. Several spoke, and read the Scriptures, and prayed, and gave out hymns just as the spirit moved them. In the evening, one of their number 'preached the gospel,' as they express it, but their morning meeting is a true church union. They carry out their plans with great simplicity and earnestness."

A little later, writing from Aberystwyth, whither he he had gone to join his Norwich friends, he suggests the following beautiful series of questions for daily self-examination :—

"*Aberystwyth, August 6th*, 1852.

"Let us, for instance, solemnly ask ourselves and meditate over these questions: 'With what feelings did I awake this morning? Did my gratitude rise to God for repose and protection, or was I like the brute, indifferent to the kindness of my heavenly Guardian? Were my thoughts scattered and desultory, or were the words of praise on my lips, and the spirit of devotion

in my heart? In my morning devotions did I enjoy a near access to God, and commune with Him even as it were from the mercy seat? Were my prayers formal and forced? Was my frame of mind sluggish and cold? Were my petitions hurried or insincere? Had I a deep sense of my unworthiness, and a full conviction of the necessity of a Saviour? Do I find my supreme delight in prayer? Having left my closet, did I watch unto prayer? I besought God to keep me from sin, but has my conduct this day been in unison with my prayers? I prayed for holiness and purity, but have I detected and suppressed the first risings of secret iniquity? I entreated God for more light and knowledge, but have I meditated on His works, and studied His word? I deprecated my easily besetting sin, but have I endeavoured to avoid it? I prayed for Zion, and for the salvation of the impenitent, but have I spoken a word of warning or exhortation to any one this day? &c.' "

The year of 1854 was one of almost constant illness. At the wish of his friends, he went with one of them to Malvern and Ben Rhydding, during the summer months, though to little purpose. His cough increased, bleeding from the lungs became frequent, and it seemed almost as if his days were numbered. In the Autumn he went to Cromer, his favourite sea-side home, and the air suited him so well that he remained there till the following spring. Feeble, however, as he was, those months were not idly spent. With the help of some friends from Norwich, he established a Sunday school in connexion with the little Methodist chapel. He had of late begun to go much among the Methodists, having indeed been admitted a member, in Norwich, the previous year, and having taught and preached among them when he was able. He found in their homely, outspoken religious life, and warm-hearted fel-

lowship, much that was congenial to his own spirit; while he found also among them less tendency than among most orthodox sects, to insist on extra-scriptural formulas of faith. Drawn much to him during his sojourn at Cromer, and entering into his desire that something should be done for the children of the place, some of those Methodist friends in Cromer, aided by some from Norwich, resolved together to open a Sunday school. At his lodgings they met for prayer and counsel on the matter. The Sunday before the school was opened, there was a special prayer-meeting in his room, after evening service. He says, in a letter, "They prayed very much in reference to the Sunday school; several of them also prayed for my restoration to health. I was again permitted to join in prayer without any harm. So ended my first Sabbath here alone, and indeed it was a good and happy day to us all." He adds a request for some packets of cheap tracts, suitable for the young, and says,—"I want to make friends with all the children of Cromer."

The school opened with twenty-five children present in the morning, and many more in the afternoon. He hoped to have preached at the little chapel on the opening Sunday, but bleeding from the lungs came on again, with increased cough, and he had to give it up. "It rather damps my hopes of usefulness," he wrote, "yet I know and feel it is all good. This solitude, these disappointments, are all what I want. Oh how much needs to be done! * * * Oh for more faith! I think my prayers centre in this at present,

'Lord, increase my faith.'" But there are some people who do much, far more than they ever know, through their influence over others, and Travers worked through the willing hands of all about him. The school was well cared for, though he could not be there himself. "Charles," (a friend from Norwich,) "put all the children and teachers in good humour, arranged them all in a few minutes, and gave them some instruction of the right kind, just suited to them. In the evening he addressed the children and parents, and they had a most delightful time. The chapel was quite full, and afterwards they had a prayer meeting in my room." Thus the little school began, and children were added to it weekly. The next night the teachers held a meeting again in his room, to strengthen each other. Two of them, a man and his wife, elderly people, could hardly read or write, and were very anxious to improve themselves, so Travers undertook to go to their house twice a week to teach them; and though it was some distance from Cromer, and it was winter time, scarcely any weather prevented his fulfilling his engagement; and always when the reading and writing was over, they would have him to 'give them a few words of prayer.' Among such interests and such friends, Travers spent a quiet, happy Christmas. If hours of sadness or loneliness came on, he had a sure refuge. "That verse in your little book," he says in a letter, "has been a comfort to me to-day, when not feeling quite well. 'Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.' Also this verse, in the

last chapter of Isaiah, which I read this morning; 'As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.' So the Lord provides for my every want." He had himself undertaken an elder class, and the young people who joined it came to his lodging whenever they liked, for a word of kind advice and sympathy. All loved their dear sick friend, who seemed to do more in his feebleness than they could do in their strength, and all did their best to make him feel at home. On Christmas morning, the Sunday scholars came in the early twilight, singing their Christmas hymns under his window. As the spring drew on, and the time came when he had to leave Cromer, he was full of thoughts and plans for those he was leaving behind. In one lad he was especially interested, and at the last meeting he had with them, this lad seemed to linger behind when the others were going.

"So I spoke to him a little by himself, giving him the best advice I could, and then held out my hand to bid him 'good bye;' but, as he still hesitated, I asked if he had anything more to say. He said, 'So long as you are going away, sir, I should like a little more prayer.' So I asked him whether *he* could not pray? He said, 'I dare say I could.' He did pray, poor lad, as well as he could, that the things he had heard that night might make a deep impression, and that if spared to another year, he might spend it differently from the past one, &c. &c. Then I prayed, after which he prayed again, quite of his own accord, after which I closed. It was a delightful time; but I wonder whether he will meet with any friend to cherish these longings of his young heart? Whether he does or not, the seed is there, and cannot perish."

And so amid tears and prayers, he returned to his Norwich home. But his work there did not pass

away. The little Sunday school remains to this hour, and has gone on prospering ever since.

Another year followed, of broken life, and of efforts to stay the progress of disease by fresh advice, change of air, wanderings in country places, or rest in his Norwich home. He tried early in 1856 to return to Manchester again; spent a little time there, hoping to labour among some Christian Brethren, but found that their principles were not quite wide enough for him; went for a few weeks to Bury, a happy time with his dear friend Franklin Howorth—and then returned to Norwich. Here, in the summer of 1856, he once again resolved to attempt something of his old work. He was not completely at ease in connection with any of the churches. He had grown too far out of sympathy with his old Unitarian friends by this time, to be able to work happily with them, and yet he shrank from the definite theological formulas, assent to which must be the condition of any ministerial work in the Methodist or Independent bodies. He could work best apart from all the churches, but in heartiest sympathy with all of every church who would help him, or let him help them.

So in one of the poorest and most neglected neighbourhoods in Norwich—right in the heart of St. Miles's—he took a very humble room, and opened it as a mission room. Here he conducted a Sunday night service, for the poor people about; had prayer meetings, Bible classes, evening classes for young men and women, teaching them reading and writing, doing anything he could to make it something of a home for

the souls of those whose lives knew no other influence of the kind. Here, too, now and then, he had Temperance meetings, and once a month a "Band of Hope" meeting, for interesting the children in Temperance. Children were always drawn to him, and at these Band of Hope meetings, hundreds of them would be packed into the room; and one who was often there has told me how orderly they always were; they loved Travers too well, were too eager to catch every word, to be disorderly. Held on the week-nights, these Temperance meetings drew in many who could hardly have been persuaded to come at first to the Sunday evening services. A widow and her daughter came in to one of these meetings, "just to laugh at them," as they told afterwards. But the tones of Travers's voice, and the few words he spoke, went home to their hearts, and they went away feeling that they must go and hear him the next Sunday evening. To that Sunday evening, they both dated the joy and peace of their lives; before, religion had been nothing to them; thenceforth, it became to them a help and a blessing, to which they clung in the extremity of poverty, and which lighted the valley of the shadow of death with the smile of God. This is but one illustration out of many which might be given. In the time that he could spare from his day-shool work, by which he supported himself, Travers almost lived among these poor people, visiting constantly about in their homes, and being among them in the classes or meetings, evening by evening. But the brightest hour of his life among them was when they had the Commu-

nion together. "That Communion Service," writes one who was often present, a helper in his work, "seemed more like the *original* one, than I ever felt it anywhere else. We all sat around a long table, and the bread and wine were passed round, and each spoke who wished, and the master himself was present there to our hearts, and the poor room felt like the holy of holies."

A brief diary which he always kept, tells of many books which he read during these years of weakness; of many visits to the sick and dying; of constant labours in the temperance cause; of a Greek class which he conducted, in connection with the Young Men's Christian Association; and of various other efforts for the good of others, in addition to his stated work as minister and missionary in St. Miles's.

At the close of 1857 his health failed sadly, as we find from a word here and there in his diary. In November he says:—"I fear I shall have to give up visiting;" and on this home visitation he always felt his usefulness very much depended. A few weeks later he says:—"At the prayer meeting last night and to-night, earnest petitions were offered that the services might not be given up. These have been dark days with me; but I was much comforted at the prayer meeting to-night." For two years, however, he carried on this work, often hardly able to walk or speak, and then was obliged to leave it for awhile. The hot summer weather in the city was too much for him; and in June, 1858, he went to Whitby, where his health was sufficiently restored to enable him to take long

walks in that delightful country, and to enjoy the society of Franklin Howorth and other friends whom he met with there. From Whitby he went to Mr. Smedley's Hydropathic Establishment, at Matlock Bank. Still, as ever, however, his whole heart was wrapped up in the interest in spiritual things, and an insensible attraction drew him into close friendship with some of like spirit to himself who were also there. Among these was a Mr. Hampton, with whom he had many happy hours. Pain and weakness were forgotten in such communion as this:—

"When Mr. Hampton was speaking of the very low state in which he was, nigh unto death when he was here before, I said, 'I was brought low, and he helped me.' 'Yes,' he said, 'and what a beautiful resolution that is followed by,—'I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.' I was much impressed by the verse, as he uttered it, and it led us into a long conversation about the Psalms, and their suitableness to every varied experience."

To this same place, while Travers was there, came Mr. Charles Stanley, a noted preacher and writer of the "Plymouth Brethren," and his visit brings out Travers's strong holding to simplicity in religious matters, and intense dread of anything tending towards antinomianism.

"*Matlock Bank, August* 18*th*, 1858.

"I believe I mentioned to you that we were expecting Mr. Stanley, the author of the 'Railway Tracts,' who has lately been preaching in the open air in Wales, and producing some impression by his addresses. He is connected with the Plymouth Brethren. Last night he preached in the chapel of the establishment, but, I think, scarcely to good purpose. He chose the book of Ruth to illustrate the experience of the backslider and the

penitent. This spiritualising was so far-fetched, that I find it difficult to call to mind, and so unauthorised, that it would not be worth repeating. Gleaning in the field of Boaz was picking up blessings at the hands of Christ, &c. His description of Christian experience was striking and forcible; but instead of preaching the simple gospel, and persuading some of the light-hearted youths to give their hearts to God, he got into the subject of perseverance. Some of our Methodist friends were there, and this led to a discussion, in which I thought the Methodists had much the best of it, both as regards truth and temper. There is a sadly narrow and overbearing spirit among the Brethren generally. The discussion continued till 10 30; and though it seemed almost essential as a counteraction to doctrine which might lead to carelessness and sin, yet, of course, it could only leave the impression on the minds of those present that Christians were divided, and knew not what was truth. On account of the service, we shall have none to-night. The Brethren had some Scripture reading this morning, and, with others of the patients, I attended; but they were at one thing only, that 'the question of sin was settled once and for ever,'—that however we might sin it need not trouble our consciences, for it would not be imputed to us, though it might trouble our hearts. Oh! I do feel thankful for the first quickening, loving, humbling, peace-giving, and sanctifying views of gospel truth into which we have been led by the good spirit of the Lord."

It is pleasant, however, to find that this does not express the whole of his impression of this Mr. Stanley. A fortnight afterwards he is there again, when Travers writes "we had a most excellent and helpful address from him."

Returning to Norwich as the winter drew on, he laboured for a little while longer among his poor people at St. Miles's, the services having been kept up during his absence by some of his friends. He began to feel, however, that the burden and responsibility of

the place, resting so entirely on himself as they did, were more than he could permanently sustain; perhaps, too, he began to feel his position of religious isolation, and to long for closer fellowship with the work of others. Offers were made to him from various directions. He was pressed to take charge of the Independent church at Gorleston, Great Yarmouth, where he had often preached and the people had become warmly attached to him. Mr. Wright also, of Buxton, in Norfolk, one of the magistrates of the county, a true Christian gentleman, would fain have had him help in his reformatory. We have a very interesting account of this reformatory in one of Travers's letters:—

"*Norwich, July 25th,* 1856.

"I am expecting William Mann for a Latin lesson very soon, and also Mr. Knapton; but I cannot help spending a few minutes in telling you of our delightful visit to Buxton. We had a very pleasant walk in the morning, leaving home about nine o'clock, just as the rain was leaving off. We got a lift in a cart about three miles through Spixworth, and reached Buxton at eleven o'clock. Mr. Wright was eager to take us at once to his Reformatory, where there are 28 inmates. He made a fresh start about ten months since, confining it only to juveniles, and putting it under the act, which provides 5s. for each lad. They are all sentenced for periods of not less than two or more than five years; so that none have yet been turned out from the establishment, but some have been there many months. The place is very pleasantly situated. From it you can see a long way towards Cromer, and it is so separated from all other dwellings as to be peculiarly appropriate for his purpose. He had tried hard to commence a year before he did, and to take a house which seemed well suited, but he could not move the friends with whom he was co-operating fast enough, and the opportunity was lost.

He said 'it was one of the Lord's leadings to keep me out of mischief; the place was within shouting distance of fifty houses of a low description, and it would have ruined us.' We found the boys working; some of them in the field, some of them shoemaking. He generally puts the town boys to shoemaking and tailoring. It was a different sight from Parkhurst, where the boys at work in the fields were guarded by a soldier with a loaded gun. And still more different when they were all playing cricket, which they are allowed to do a short time after dinner. But he says, 'We must make them happy. We cannot make them good if we do not make them happy.' When he goes amongst them, he drops little remarks which are likely to stir up the boys to diligence and perseverance. He is very friendly with them, and greatly attached to them, and they know it. With him, and with the whole establishment, religion is the basis of everything. The head master is a man, Mr. Wright says, 'of deep religious experience,' and while he is valuable for his practical knowledge in farming, and able also to teach in the school, one little incident shewed that he must be most valuable for his moral and religious influence. One night the boys were rather "shifty" at their evening service. He was engaged in prayer, but stopped, and got up, saying 'I cannot mock my God.' He sent the boys to bed, and walked a short time in the field. When he returned, the boys said, 'Oh, Governor, we do not like to go to sleep without you pray with us.' We'll get out of bed if you'll pray.' And so they did, and he prayed as they desired."

Mr. Wright often called to talk to Travers about "his boys." His mind had long been concerned about the little "city arabs" of Norwich, and this reformatory, which he set up near his own country house, and which he looked after like a father, was the outcome of his anxiety. It was a good work, just of the kind to attract Travers, but frequent returns of bleeding warned him that he had not the strength for anything of the sort. And besides this, he always

shrank from any engagement which he could not easily leave if he felt able to return to Manchester. To Manchester his heart still turned with deep longing to labour there, and with the feeling that he could labour nowhere else so well. And now, as often before, when a prospect of returning health gladdened him with new hope, he began to look thitherward again, in the desire that some opening might appear which should afford him the opportunity of labouring among other Christians as a helper in some cause, the responsibility of which should not rest upon himself alone.

MANCHESTER ONCE MORE: 1859-61.

Religious life in our great cities takes more varied forms than most people are aware of. Not even the divergent types of the Anglican church, with the varieties of Baptist and Independent Nonconformity, and the multiform sections of the great Methodist family, can satisfy the restless individuality of the human soul. New offshoots from existing religious communities are growing up every year, which never find any place in the formal catalogue of sects. Probably there is no large town but has, here and there in its great wilderness of absorbed and busy life, some half dozen of these little sporadic churches, that, mostly in little upper rooms in back streets, are carrying on their humble work and worship, and aiming at something nearer to their ideal of what a church of Christ should be, than their members have been able to find in the larger ecclesiasticisms of the religious world. The little sketch of "The church of God in Lantern Yard" which forms one of the quaintest parts of George Eliot's story of humble life, "Silas Marner," is true, almost to the letter, of humble religious communities, which may be met with by the curious in such matters in London, or Manchester, or Liverpool. Some of these have come out from existing

churches, because they can find none rigid enough in Calvinistic doctrine or Puritan discipline; others, in search of simpler, homelier, religious communion, and greater scope for evangelistic work; others, again, from love of doctrinal freedom and dislike of sectarianism.

Such a little church of humble, earnest folk, was there in 1859, meeting in a room in Crown Street, in Hulme, one of those densely-populated suburbs which have sprung up about Manchester during the last quarter of a century. Here, a few tradespeople and a goodly number of working-folk met together, Sunday by Sunday, carrying on a Sunday school, and holding religious services and prayer meetings. Not bound together by any rigid orthodoxy, and eschewing any sectarian name, they yet were what would ordinarily be called strongly evangelical. Some of them had come from the Plymouth Brethren, some had been Baptists, some Independents, a good many Methodists. A few were old friends of Travers's at Lower Mosley Street, who like him, partly by his influence, had become dissatisfied with Unitarianism. They had no minister;—if they had any strong, cardinal dogma, it was perhaps dislike of what they called the "one-man system." As near as might be, they conformed to the habits of the early church; and when they came together, every one had "a psalm, a doctrine, a tongue, an interpretation;" and so, striving to edify each other, they lived an obscure, but simple, happy, useful, religious life.

Several of the leading brethren of this little band had

been for many years close friends and very ardent followers of Travers, and had often urged him to come and settle down among them. In the early months of 1859, they renewed their solicitations, and these reinforcing Travers's already strong desire to return to Manchester, he decided, after much thought and prayer, that he would cast in his lot with them, or at any rate that he would go and spend a little time among them, with a view to joining them altogether if he found it a work to which he could join himself with full heartiness. In the middle of April he came to his old friend, Franklin Howorth, at Bury,—with whom he spent a few happy days, preaching for him at a little cottage service,—and then went to Manchester for his first Sunday among the brethren in Crown-street, taking up his abode with one of them, John Ferguson. No better account of his opening work there, and of his fellow-workers, can be given, than that he wrote home the following day.

"*Manchester, April 18th,* 1859.

"Through the great mercy of God we had a very happy day yesterday; quite such a beginning as to render my continuance here almost certain. The school is very small at present, and there was no need for John and me to be there till near ten o'clock, so we went a little walk together, it being beautifully fine, and brought back with us four boys, who were in the fields playing peg-top. They came into the room with us, that they might know where to come again, and seemed to be in earnest. However, they did not make their appearance in the afternoon. I took their names and addresses, so that I can see after them. The room is in Crown Street. It is only a back and front room thrown into one, and closely packed can scarcely hold 100. It is up stairs; and two or three steps at the far end lead up into a

kind of garret workshop, which is used as the school-room. Scholars and brethren together nearly filled the meeting-room in the morning. The service is quite without previous arrangement. One friend gave out a hymn and prayed:—then two or three friends read suitable portions of Scripture:—then, I think, another hymn was sung, and then we partook of the bread and wine (unfermented, I am glad to say), and then one or two more friends read and spoke, simply and earnestly, and very much in the power of the Spirit. This sort of way the service went on, with very short intervals of silence, and with great comfort and feeling of the presence of God. In the afternoon, John and I went to school, and each had classes. I should think there were some seventy scholars present, most of them little ones; but some boys about fourteen years of age take great interest in the instruction given. There is a sort of real and settled earnestness in these Manchester boys, which is most delightful to meet with once more. After the school there was a teachers' meeting:—in this and the meeting at John's house on Saturday evening, I became nicely acquainted with several of the brethren. They are very much of one heart, and bound together in love. There is one Charles among them, who keeps a little shop in the neighbourhood, and has much poverty to contend with. For a little time he was in my class at Lower Mosley Street. He is a genuine character, loved and respected by the whole neighbourhood. If anybody wants such help as he can render, they come to him. Sometimes, in the middle of the night, he is called up to help and visit the sick;—he is so handy, as well as so great a comfort by his advice and prayers. I long for you to know Charley, as they all call him. Some fourteen or fifteen boys in the neighbourhood, rough ones they have been, have been led to the Saviour by hearing Caughey, and were at Charley's on Thursday night. I am to meet with them next Thursday night, as the brethren seem to think they will want all the help and advice that we can give them. In the evening the room was very full, many of the brethren being obliged to go up into the school-room where they could hear, though not see. A great number of old scholars were there, and I kept them very much in mind in what I said. There seemed to be a good impression made on

their minds. The subject, you remember, was 'Christ crucified—the power of God and the wisdom of God.' "

In this simple, brotherly communion of worship and work, Travers rejoiced. He could not help contrasting it with what he had thought rather a declension from pure apostolic simplicity, among his friend's people at Bury. "I fear F.'s people," he writes, "have quite left the principles with which I thought they had started. They pay for seats, and are building a regular chapel, in which it is not unlikely that they will have pews. At any rate it will not be adapted for anything like the services which we have, but for the *one-man* system." Even the simplicity of the Crown Street arrangements was, however, no absolute security for primitive harmony, supposing, which may be doubted, that even in the primitive churches there was any such perfect harmony; and, a week later, Travers was writing:—

"I began to think on Saturday evening that my way here was not very clear, but I feel satisfied again now. There are little differences among the brethren, some having come out of the Plymouth Brethren, Baptists, and Independents, whilst others are from the Methodists. The former have a dread of class meetings, and even of prayer meetings, unless very subdued and controlled."

Again, a few weeks later, all was not satisfactory. They have given way about prayer meetings. "They are going to have a prayer meeting on Sunday mornings at seven," he writes; adding, however, significantly, "there seems to be a wish among the brethren to revive out of their rather torpid state." Poor Crown Street brethren! The fact was, that after the

first enthusiasm of their welcome was over, Travers was finding out that which always has in such cases to be found out, that human nature is much the same, whether in little nameless upper rooms in back streets, or in St. Vanity's Church or Ebenezer Chapel; that, anywhere, the one hard thing is for the soul to keep its life fresh and pure and strong, up to the grand ideal which is lifted up anew before its eyes in every Sunday's Scripture. But though to Travers, just in the fervour of returning to his old scenes of happiest work, things at Crown Street might seem, after the first week or two "in a rather torpid state," yet there is no reason to doubt that a genuine and noble work after its kind was doing there. Travers gives evidence enough of this in his letters. "The school," he says, "consists of boys picked out of the streets from a rough wild stock, but there is a good work doing among them." And what can be more beautiful and touching than the following sketch—just one evening, of many, at this good work—as it occurs in one of his letters to his Norwich friends:

"*Manchester, May 27th*, 1859.

"We had another delightful meeting last night, in Charley's bedroom. This time it was a prayer meeting. Some of the lads prayed very nicely. Others could not say much. One could only thank God for being there. Two or three weeks ago he did not know his alphabet, though fourteen years old. When I first tried to teach him it seemed as if he could not learn it. But he mastered it at home, as the first fruits of his conversion, and is now beginning to read short words easily. He was succeeded by a little fellow, who began to say something about the boys in the street cursing and swearing, whilst we were met to pray. This brought him to tears, and a dead stop, so that I was obliged to

take up his prayer for him. As soon as we had closed the meeting, one boy went and whispered something to Charley. He wanted to know whether we could not have a meeting every night! One boy, James, was brought to the meeting for the first time by his companion. The two boys had been talking together at their work, and now when I spoke to James at the close of the meeting, the tears started to his eyes at once. After talking to him a little, the boy who had brought him began to tell him of the love of Christ, and how good it was in Him to die for him, 'big a sinner as he was;' 'and then there's another thing to think at,' he said, urging one argument after another to persuade him to give his heart to God. One boy who is full of life and fun, and lost his leg in trying to ride behind a carriage, has been at all our meetings, and seems to be really in his childish way coming to the Saviour. But I could go on endlessly about these dear lads. I always feel when I come from them as if I had been amongst the angels in heaven. God grant that the good work may spread, and that these dear lads may be kept faithful."

This "Charley" was one of those members of the little Crown Street community who entered most warmly into Travers's plans. From the influence which Travers had had upon them, but quite of their own accord, a lot of the rough street lads about, who had occasionally come in to the Sunday services, began a prayer meeting among themselves. As may be supposed, the proceedings were often characterised by a wild sort of fervour, which some of the more staid elder brethren did not like, and so the use of the regular meeting room was refused. Then it was that this Charley Gibson let them meet in his little cottage. There gathered, night after night, as strange an assemblage as could well be found:—a dozen or fifteen lads, ragged, untaught, of the wildest type, but who with

Travers were as docile as little children, and loved him as they had probably never loved any human being before. They would have met with him every night in the week, if he had been able. Sometimes he taught them to read, sometimes they spent the time in praying and singing; and all the people about noticed the change to order and quietness which, in consequence, came on the neighbourhood.

Only a few letters further, also—he is "going for a day to Liverpool." Had "a little sailor lad to see, who was over at Manchester the Sunday I was at Bury, so that I missed seeing him; but he slipped a shilling into John's hand for me. It is by little deeds of this kind that the Lord provides for me."

In such works, and amid such encouragements as this, a few months passed quickly by. He began to hope that now for once he had found his true and permanent place. It was a happy work on the whole. If the friends about him were not quite so enthusiastic as he was, they at least rejoiced in him and his work, and helped in it as they were able. They were proud of him, too, to a degree that often troubled him, for he shrank with dread from anything like personal glorification in such working for God; and whatever elements of discord among themselves there might have been before, were for the time at least forgotten, in the happy activity into which the quickening power of his fresh, self-forgetful eagerness, aroused them.

And yet, already he was feeling the need of something more. His spirit was not completely satisfied. It was very delightful, meeting with these humble,

fervent men and women in their homely gatherings, and these rough street lads in that little bare chamber, and hearing their simple outspoken thoughts about religious life, and yet he could not help longing for something *different*—he would have shrunk from saying *higher*—as well. It is never good for a man to be altogether among people below his own level of intellect and culture. We all want some one to look up to. No one ever felt this more than Travers. But at Crown Street all were looking up to him, leaning upon him. He struggled bravely against the feeling, but it would creep out. Before the summer was over, he was writing home—

"Oh how often I seem to want the companionship of some one who will help to lift one up a little bit! Perhaps when we get to open out a little our Christian experiences to one another, we shall find the help which I very much need. I still feel as bad as ever. I have not yet got out of the 7th chapter of Romans into the 'glorious liberty' of the 8th. Many, I know, are contented to remain there all their days; but my soul cries out in bitterness, yet not without hope, 'who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?'"

And again, a few days later:—

"Yes, I do often feel my loneliness very much, though I did not know that I had mentioned it before, nor will I dwell on it now. When you come, I can tell you all my sorrows and hopes in a way that I never can on paper. I fear that there will be little to interest you in our work or people; but your knowledge of them will be a great comfort and help to me. I feel myself to be a constant failure—called to a duty which I have not faithfulness or courage to perform; and though I would not complain of the powers which God has given me, yet I feel that they are behind what is wanted. The dear lads are kind and friendly

with me, the best friends I have, those I mean with whom I feel most at home. I think I must now and then spend a Saturday afternoon in taking them a country walk. We had a pleasant time at Dunham yesterday. The day was most beautiful; and the park, with its noble trees waving to and fro in the summer breeze, never looked more lovely. It brought back old Lower Mosley Street days and friends to my remembrance; and I could not refrain from wandering into the parts of the park which we used always to frequent. I suppose anything like that first love never can be again. This afternoon the scholars have milk and buns given them, after which the teachers and friends, some of them, I think very few, will drink tea together."

Poor Travers! must the word ever be "Arise and depart, for this is not thy rest." Once more at least he began to feel that it was to be so. While thus feeling discouraged about himself, it came round to him, that one or two of those who had been the leading exhorters before he came, were saying unkind things about his always preaching at the evening service. It had been no wish of his; he had only done it on the pressing invitation of the society, which had been justified by the great increase in the attendance, and he at once offered to desist, or simply to take it with the others; but it troubled Travers sadly to find that there could be any feelings of the kind among them, and hastened on the crisis. Again, as so often before, came his old enemy, in the double presence of mental re-action and broken health. It is better to wear out than to rust out; but no fiery earnestness of spirit can enable a weak and feeble man to do a strong man's work. Why, even in May, in addition to the seven o'clock prayer meetings, and evening services, and Sunday school work morning and afternoon, with

his daily teachings, and nightly cottage meetings, he was preaching out of doors.

"In the evening, before service, two of us spoke for a little time in the open air. This is the first time I have attempted to do so since I was at College. It did not try or fatigue me at all, and I expect it will become a frequent occupation with me."

Alas! not "a frequent occupation" for long. With the dull, raw, northern autumn, came his old racking cough, and that terrible bleeding at the lungs; and the doctors told him his only chance of life was to give up all ministerial work, at once to go southwards, and to live as much as possible out of doors.

BROADENING VIEWS.

"I SPEND several hours almost every day at my garden, and whilst I am digging and weeding there all alone, I can think of you all, and lift up my heart in prayer to God to comfort and strengthen you all, and to make all these things work together for good." Thus wrote he from Ipswich, on the 18th of November, 1859. He had gone there to live for a while. He loved the place, and would be better able there to keep from being drawn into the old work which had, for the time, been absolutely forbidden him. For nearly a year and half, much of which he spent here, sometimes staying awhile at Highbury, at his father's, and sometimes also at Norwich, he lived a retired life, keeping altogether from preaching and his old occupations. Much time he spent in his garden, much time also in quiet study and reading ;—the reading room of the Mechanics' Institution, which was not much frequented, being a favourite resort of his, his evenings being often spent there over his books.

But whether preaching and teaching and ministering to others, or weeding in his garden, or pursuing his own studies, all the thought and interest of his life still centred in religion. Perhaps all the more, because, not absorbed in actual work for it, he seems to have been able during this time to give to the subject a

calmer, more unbiassed thought. If his letters have less of work to speak of, they are more interesting than ever in their record of the workings of his mind. I find in them, at this time, something of a changing tone from what had characterised them for some years back. There is greater breadth than there had been. Narrow-hearted he had never been, never could be. At the period when the views in which he had been brought up had come to seem to him most strongly to be defective and erroneous, he still maintained his old personal love for many of those who held them. And so also when he was most out of patience with the formality of churches in general, and their lack of what he looked on as primitive, fervent Christian life, though he preferred such communities as the Crown Street brethren, he could never tolerate any pretence of their being "*the* church," or the only people who preached "the gospel." But now, as he looked quietly out upon all these matters, there seems to have come over his mind a broadening appreciation of ordinary churches, and ordinary forms of religious thought and life. I do not for a moment mean to imply that he was returning towards the Unitarian faith of his youth. If anything, his views were steadily settling down into complete acquiescence in such faith as he found among his Methodist, or moderate Church friends. There is no tone of hesitation in the following passage :—

"*Ipswich, January 5th*, 1860.

"If I have not spoken much in my letters lately of that wonderful revelation to the burdened hearts of sinful men, that 'the

blood of Jesus Christ, God's own Son, cleanseth from all sin,' it is not because my faith in this is shaken, or because I feel the need of it less than I did. Never, never, never did I feel the preciousness of this truth as I feel it now. Without it I should be in outer darkness, in misery without any comfort, in uttermost despair. In David's words, but with more than David's light, I cry to God, 'Wash me, and I, even I, shall be whiter than snow.'"

But at the same time there seems to have been deepening in him a perception that, underneath the differing thoughts and creeds of men, there might after all be a closer unity of faith, a truer identity of religious experience than he had before suspected. "The truest theology," he writes in one of his letters, "is, I think, often found in hymns, a refreshing contrast to the cold-blooded narrowness of human creeds." And the letter from which I have quoted this continues in a strain which shews this broadening in a very marked way:—

"*Ipswich, November* 18*th*, 1859.

"God has, I believe, been instructing me in some things of late which I did not see before, and which I have perhaps, therefore, more frequently referred to, such as the *true conversion* of all who repent of sin, and seek to live to God, though they may frequently stumble, and know nothing of the experience which so-called Evangelical Christians and Methodists seem to regard as necessary; also the hope, rising to an assurance, that the work of redeeming mercy is not confined to this world, and that the sentence of eternal death may at any time be remitted; also, that all doctrinal exclusiveness in the church, and all attempts to judge of others' internal fitness for church membership, are alike evil and unscriptural; and last of all, that Christian influence is not confined to conversation on religious subjects, but that the Christian's character shines forth in the midst of the various pursuits, intercourse, and amusements in which he may be engaged.

And here it is that, I think, we have been judging harshly, both doing harm and receiving harm. Perhaps I ought not to say *we*. *I* have, I know I have, misrepresented Christianity, and especially those truths which have brought me so much peace and comfort, by the course which I have taken. I have suffered by not receiving that benefit which we may derive even from the ordinary intercourse of all who love God. There is no 'enlightened heathenism' in all that a true Christian such as W—— and Mrs. S.—— and the ——s, (mentioning a number of his old Unitarian friends) whom I think you mentioned the other day, say and do. It is all Christianity—except that they are ever, in this world of many temptations, led astray,—Christianity in business and in pleasure; in health and in sickness; at home and abroad; in conversation and in solitude; in laughter and in tears. And, more or less, it is so with less perfect Christians."

Again, under date January 21, 1860, he writes in the same spirit;—"A united Prayer-meeting is just commenced here, held daily. All who 'believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour,' are invited. I begin to feel more than ever repelled where this restriction is placed." On another occasion, about the same time, when some one had been inserting in the *Norfolk Chronicle*, an advertisement speaking of Unitarians as "outcasts from the Christian hope," he writes,—"It is grievous to think of such views being held, but surely they are dying out. On the whole there is a better understanding of, and a better feeling towards Unitarians, than there used to be." Here and there, too, comes in a softening of his thoughts on the subject of the future destiny of the wicked:

"*Ipswich, January 23rd*, 1860.

"We had a very beautiful sermon from Mr. Owen, on the words, 'In everything give thanks.' Only, he included in every-

thing, what I am sure St. Paul never meant, the death of those dear to us, who die in their sins. He himself evaded saying that we were to give thanks for this; but pointed to the hope that might arise in the eleventh hour; 'and even if the soul should be lost, lost for ever, would not the Judge of all the earth do right? He would so manifest to us the wisdom and righteousness of all His dealings that we should acquiesce in His will, and no mourning for lost souls would exist amongst the regions of the blest.' All this I cannot understand, and when I think of it my heart cries out to God for one ray of light, or is ready to murmur and complain that no light is given."

In the same month, January, 1860, he was summoned to London for the funeral of one of his family connexions, and spent a few days at his father's, at Highbury. Remembering how the changes of the previous ten years had inevitably led him a good deal out of the line of his old London friends, it is pleasant to think of his going among them now with these wider sympathies which had been growing in his heart of late. "I was never so struck with the beauty of my father's reading as I was this morning, when he read the fifteenth chapter of Corinthians at the Cemetery," he writes on the day of the funeral; and many little sentences and allusions in his letters shew how he felt more drawn to them all. In other ways, too, his letters reflect the same changing thought. A stronger "evangelical" than ever, in his own faith and feeling, he yet writes thus in his impatience at any addition, even by his most revered teachers, to the simplicity of Christ:

"*Ipswich, February 6th,* 1861.

"I do not wonder at Mr. E——'s feeling strongly about the narrowness and want of charity, which often accompanies evan-

gelical preaching. I find it so even with so genial and comfortable, though earnest a preacher as Mr. W——. In speaking of the reasons for praising Jesus Christ, he first dwelt on the words 'who loved us.' Then, in considering that love, he spoke first of its sovereignty. He loved *us*. 'Angels sinned, but he did not love them; he did not pity them.' It seemed to me the strangest argument for gratitude and praise, and a pure evangelical invention. Then in his morning sermon on the immutability of Jesus Christ, he argued from it that there could be no hope beyond the grave for those who die impenitent. Now it is the very attribute of immutability which would lead me, in the midst of great darkness, to entertain at least a faint hope that the door of mercy which has been opened ever since sin entered into the world, and death by sin, will never more be closed. More and more I think one feels how unsafe and wrong it is to dogmatise, or to go beyond what is most plainly revealed,—a few glimpses granted us of pure bright light to guide and comfort us on our way."

In this quiet life, partly at Ipswich, partly at Norwich, another year passed over, and once more he is in London. Eighteen months of almost total rest have partially restored his health, and he has resolved to try once again whether he cannot, by great carefulness, engage in his old work without breaking down. He finds his father, he writes very thankfully, favourably disposed towards his returning to Manchester; but he plans to go first to Mr. Howorth's, at Bury, to work awhile with him, before making any permanent arrangements. Those few days, however, that he rests at Highbury, were very enjoyable, bringing him among both old and new friends, and giving him especially an opportunity of hearing and becoming acquainted with the Rev. F. D. Maurice.

"I went to Mr. J. J. Tayler's to tea, and had some delightful

conversation with him. He read me some passages from a little German Monograph on Bunsen, giving further details of his last conversations with his friends. He speaks of his increasing dependence upon the redeeming mercy of God in Jesus Christ, especially as expressed in the words which were uttered by himself, and in the hymns of the German Evangelical Church. Mr. Crabbe Robinson came in for half an hour, and walked away with me. He wanted to give me an introduction to Maurice, and expressed sympathy with such views as mine rather than with those of the old school of Unitarians. Maurice's class, at nine in the evening, was the great privilege of the day, but what can you think of such a man having only seven or eight to attend to his instructions? He is perfectly simple in the class-room, and so genial and ready to converse, and enter into *explanation*, that one is utterly at a loss to account for such a state of things. I believe there are 200 or 300 students at the College, and, besides, the class is open to any others who like to attend. In reference to faith in God, he said, 'my own deep and tremendous necessities are more to me than all philosophies. If I *could do* without the living God, I do not think any philosophies could make me believe in Him. All history without Him as the Redeemer of his children, delivering them from sin and bondage, is a perfect riddle to me, and my own life a deeper riddle than all.'"

It is interesting to read his comparison between Mr. Maurice with his few pupils, and Mr. Spurgeon with his great crowded Tabernacle:—

"*Highbury, March* 30*th*, 1861.

"I did not go to Mr. Bickersteth's last night, as I had thought of doing, but to Mr. Spurgeon's new Tabernacle. The mass of human beings was so great, the light so glaring, the place so like an enormous theatre, and the whole scene of such a character, that it was difficult to engage in the calm and solemn worship of God, and even this morning my head feels quite hot and mazy. Nothing could present a greater contrast than Spurgeon's sermon did to Mr. Maurice's. Every blessing, according to Spurgeon,

is for the elect few; according to Maurice, the inheritance of every human being, whose nature Christ took, whose trials Christ has borne, whose temptations Christ has borne, whose enemies Christ has conquered, so that in Him all men are redeemed, and may claim to be children of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ. And though Spurgeon has an earnestness of his own, and a plain homely way of urging what he has to say upon his hearers, I could not help feeling the want of that deeper earnestness, combined with reverence and humility, which is so marked a feature of Maurice's preaching and character. It will be very hard in that great theatre of a place, with the multitudes who come there for curiosity, for his people ever to feel as they wish to feel in a place of worship. But, perhaps, habitual attendance there will remove all these obstacles to spiritual worship."

Perhaps if he had heard Mr. Spurgeon a few more times, he would have found that underneath that rather hard, dogmatic, business-like speech of his (so different from the tremulous humility which Travers himself ever felt, and which his every tone in preaching unconsciously expressed) there was a true religious power and fervour, mighty in its way to touching the multitude. For "the mighty rushing wind," as well as for "the still small voice," there is a place and a work among the redeeming agencies of God.

THE HOME MISSION.

At the beginning of April, 1861, Travers came to Bury. He intended, as has been said, to remain there a month or two, working quietly with his friend Mr. Howorth, and then to return amongst his old Manchester friends, if the way should open for him. But Bury is only eight miles from Manchester, and the attraction was too strong for him; so one day he went over, called on a number of his old friends, and in the evening walked quietly into the room of his old Crown Street people, moved now to a better place in the same street. The welcome there is too good to be told in any words than his own,—only written, it must be remembered, in order that those at home might share in his joy:—

"*Bury, April 12th*, 1861.

"It was towards the close of the service that I got there, and all that went on in the room and in the neighbourhood for the next hour I cannot tell you. The people seemed *wild* with joy, and would not hear of my ever leaving them any more. I could scarcely speak a word whilst they were all crowding round me. You never heard anything like Charles Gibson's arguments and prayers. They seem *all* to be going on well. It is a much better room than that in which they used to meet, and the Sunday School has increased. They are very glad to have come back again near to their old quarters, for it is essentially a missionary work, and they are in the midst of their field of labour.

I have thought a good deal about the matter during the night and this morning, and do not see how I can forsake them altogether; at the same time, I do not wish to be so closely tied to them. Nor, seeing the number of preachers and labourers amongst them, do I think there is any need. It is particularly in home-visiting and the instruction of the youths that I can be of use; and if I preach at all, I must keep myself at liberty to do so wherever I may be most wanted. There is such an absence of exclusiveness amongst them, that I can quite work with them so far, but I cannot *join* a church which attempts in any degree to judge who are worthy, and who are not; and I should feel and act more freely amongst them, if not a *member* with them—beyond membership in the great human family redeemed by the blood of Christ. They do not seem to care about any of these things, so long as I am in their midst to do just what I am able to do, and how I may think best. I have told them that I shall stay a little while, that I am not going just yet, and have no doubt I shall soon have a letter from John, telling me their thoughts and wishes."

The "letter from John,"—John Ferguson, the friend with whom during his last sojourn he had found a home,—appears to have been satisfactory; for, ten days later, he was again settled in Manchester. Mainly, he would still continue to work at Crown Street, but not as a *church member* with them. He had grown, since he was with them before, rather out of love with the—"church membership"—system; and moreover, his calmer and more thoughtful religious spirit was hardly so much at home as formerly among their vehement demonstrativeness. Here is his outlook on the work and its prospects, on the day but one after his settling in Manchester:—

"6, *Thurza Street, April 22nd*, 1861.

"I came here on Saturday afternoon. I was rather tempted

to stay on at Bury, but I thought it best to get over whatever pain or difficulty there might be connected with my return to Manchester, at once. I could not help feeling downcast, but your letter was here to help me. I 'broke bread' with the brethren in Crown Street yesterday morning, instead of going to Church, that they might not imagine me to be separated from them in spirit, if I should not be so entirely with them as I used to be. I have spoken to several, and they seem to understand my intention of not being altogether a member of their church. They are very, very kind, and so caught my wishes, as it were intuitively and unconsciously, that whilst shewing their faithful and affectionate attachment, there was no repetition of the scene of Thursday week; not even a mention of me in the prayers and addresses throughout the day. I said a few words in prayer before the close of the morning service. In the afternoon I went with John to his 'Gallery of Illustrations.' It is a sort of penny theatre in appearance, made of wood, and used in the week for the exhibition of cheap panoramas. It only holds about 300 people, but all sorts of persons seem to come in, who would not so easily be brought into a regular place of worship. I have no doubt it is useful, but I do not think that preaching there has so strong a claim upon me as teaching at Crown Street. I was at Crown Street again in the evening—the room was very full. They have been getting on well during the last two years. There are many new faces. Amongst them, some who were 'undecided' when I left, are now members with them. A few, I think, have not been doing so well. One of the brethren addressed them in a very simple but earnest manner, and then, as he expressed a hope that some one else would say a few words, I spoke for about ten minutes. He had been speaking from the 1st chapter of St. John, so I added a few words on the verse, 'As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.' There is a wonderful family feeling in this little gathering—mothers with their children, and numbers of neighbours who could not go to any chapel; also a number of lads and young girls from the Sunday school. It is very different from the quiet reverential services of Church, and I cannot fall in with much that is going on. There is a great deal of doubtful

sort of excitement, some young people coming, I fear, only for the fun, and much noise and levity in coming out, and I rather regret having got into the midst of this kind of religious life so entirely. It seems, however, to be the leading of God. One may hope that a little quiet training and cultivation of the young people will do them good. It is the *great want* of this, amidst much that is earnest and good, which more than anything constrains me to remain amongst them for a while. But I shall not bind myself to them, and they understand that I do not look to them for support. There was certainly a great deal to grieve one last night, as well as much to rejoice and be thankful for. I think of getting a number of the lads together this week, and seeing whether they would like to have a Bible Class. I fear they will find anything so quiet and humbling rather dull for them, but you have no idea how very much they want it, so it ought to be tried. I also mean to begin calling at once from house to house amongst the neighbours. There have been what they call revival services for the last fortnight, and to-night there is to be a tea meeting in connexion with them. I trust it may be of a quiet and serious character."

Among these people, then, he resumed his old work; in part at least, for he had to support himself by mathematical classes and other private teaching. He obtained an engagement at Mr. Hamilton Sharpe's school, at Old Trafford, and had other private pupils as well. No easy life, but he set to it with his old happy spirit. "The relief of not being supported by these poor people is very great," he writes; "it was always very painful to me." He was more independent, too, on this account, which was more than ever necessary because of a certain consciousness of an imperfect sympathy with the Crown Street work. Once or twice in the morning after the early prayer meeting there, he went to Church, "felt it a great

comfort to listen to that beautiful service after so long a separation from it." Yet, even there, his soul was only half at rest, and he expresses his want of "some minister of that experience and depth of heart which I have found in three such different men as Mr. Wodehouse, Mr. Turner, and Mr. Maurice."

A few extracts from his letters shall tell something of the thoughts that were passing in his mind in these busy days. Now his heart, always so open to catch the loving aspect of all human things, is overflowing about the "bell-carts" which he meets on May-day, on his morning walk to Mr. Sharpe's school :—

"It is very pretty, too, to see all the cart and waggon horses adorned, and to think how the rough-looking men have been joining with their wives and children to welcome in the spring. It is a curious and very pleasant relic of poetic feeling in the midst of mills and warehouses."

Now we meet with some deep and beautiful thoughts on the great subject of God's work upon the world through Christ, that seem to come very near the deep central truth which the creeds, in their very efforts to explain and define, sometimes unconsciously obscure :—

"*May*, 1861.

"I dare not say anything about the counsels of God, more than is revealed. When men say that the death of Christ satisfies His justice, or that the wrath of God against sin fell upon Christ, I think they are using rather venturesome language. Yet I cannot but feel that by divine appointment, and by His own self-sacrificing love, and His oneness with poor, suffering, sinful man, Jesus plunged himself into the abyss of human woe, even into that deepest human misery, which we might have imagined it impossible for the sinless one to have experienced. In accept-

ing this sacrifice God reveals His forgiving mercy to the whole human family. In that forgiving mercy all who seek His face find peace and joy. Forgiveness in the sense of the removal of the sentence of future punishment does not seem to me to enter into the minds of the apostles, or to be that of which Christ speaks. We rejoice in forgiving love inasmuch as we know that notwithstanding our sins and wanderings from God, His ear is open to our cry, and His arms are always stretched forth to welcome us home. And this forgiveness, a *universal* blessing, not an exclusive privilege, is not merely the subject of Christ's teaching, but is bound up with Himself and with His work. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. I do not know whether I express myself at all clearly in my letters, but I hope you may catch some faint idea of what I mean."

And now again we come upon a little sentence which shews how that simplicity of heart of his, goes right to the reality of things, and clings to it, theological formulas and proprieties notwithstanding :

"I am so very much wanting nice tracts; a few really loving ones, which will touch people's hearts. I cannot meet with them. All Charles Stanley's tracts are to tell people to give over their strivings, and look to Christ; but the people I go amongst *are not striving.*"

Ah ! is it wonderful that a spirit like this was too broad and catholic for the little church in Crown Street, with its strong hearty fervour, but somewhat narrow and exclusive thought ?

All went on well enough for about a month after his return. They were only too glad to have him back among them on any terms, and no question of membership or non-membership was raised. Things were prospering, and the congregations were im-

proving, and there was even beginning to be some talk of raising money to build a new chapel for him. But suddenly some question of membership or communion was raised; a few stood out strongly for membership by Baptism, and there was a threatening of unpleasantness. Travers's old reverence for freedom fired up at the very thought of restriction or exclusion. He could not endure it. He might indeed have contested the question, but he would not by any act of his raise up disagreement. He preferred to withdraw quietly. He gave up the whole thing at once!

And this led him to the last considerable effort of his life;—the one to which was given what little strength he had left—the one which he thought of in his dying hours—his "Home Mission." He would not leave Manchester; surely there was room enough for him to work there, even though it might not be with his old Crown Street friends:—nowhere else did he feel he could work so well. No, he would not leave; he would himself take a small room, in some poor street where Christ's work most needed to be done; and as he could not work *in* any of the churches, he would work the best he could *out* of them! He went down to one who had been a warm, true friend through twenty years—Thomas Parry—told him his purpose, found him willing to help, and they two went out to seek a room. In a day or two a room was found. It was only a poor two-roomed cottage, a squalid, miserable place, in a rough, neglected neighbourhood; but the rougher it was, the more need of Christ's work there, and so it was taken.

And then they went together, these two, down into the open market,—Travers as happy as if it was a palace they had found,—and there, among the old furniture stalls, they sought out some half-dozen old forms, and bought them, and returned, carrying them on their backs, to fit up the little cottage for a school and preaching room. Ah! that were a sight indeed to have seen! That weak, frail figure—for he was no longer the buoyant youth, but a grey-haired man, aged before his time by sore conflict and anguish of soul—carrying home the benches through the Manchester streets, to fit up his little Mission School! Reader, is there no lesson there for all of us,—no shame to us in all our timid conventionality, in all our shrinking from any service out of the common beat, in all our trying to be Christians without bearing any real cross?

Here, then, in this little cottage, in Lord Street, he began what he called his "Home Mission." Writing about it to a friend, it was suggested that if his letter were printed and circulated among his old friends, there would be many who would be glad to help; and accordingly, a few sentences being added to deprecate any help being sent him, except of the most perfect freewill, this was done. The letter was as follows:—

6, *Thyrza Street, Chorlton Road,*
Manchester, May 21, 1861.

"DEAR——

"I will endeavour, in as few words as I can, to comply with your request, by stating the objects I have in view in commencing the Home Mission in Lord Street.

"I purpose, with the blessing of God, to spend a large portion of my time in visiting, from house to house, the poor people of the neighbourhood, which is thickly inhabited, believing that there is no way so effectual as this, however humble and laborious it may seem, of reaching the hearts of those who are outside all church and chapel influence. In connection with this home visitation, it has appeared desirable to hire a house, in which to gather together as many as possible of the stray children, who, from their ragged clothes, or from want of being sought, or from some other cause, have not yet found their way to any Sunday school. Besides the religious instruction on Sunday, it is proposed to have secular classes on week nights. It is also intended to have meetings on Sunday evenings, and at other convenient times, for prayer, for reading and expounding the Scriptures, and for religious conversation and addresses of a homely and familiar character. It is thought that many will attend such meetings, held in a cottage like their own, who would not, in the first instance, attend the services of a church or chapel. I also feel, that it is quite in harmony with the objects of a Home Mission to endeavour to supply the moral and intellectual wants of the people amongst whom we labour, and especially to nurture home affections, and promote home comfort and happiness.

"The work is, to the fullest extent, undenominational. It simply aims at awakening religious interest amongst a people who seem very indifferent to religion, and very much sunk in ignorance and sensuality. I wish to know them well, that, by friendship and sympathy with them, I may have more influence in speaking to them of the love of God in the gift of His Son, and of that forgiveness and eternal life which are bestowed upon us in Him. May the love of Christ constrain some to offer themselves as fellow-labourers! There is room for those who have much time at their disposal, and for those who have little.

"You can shew this letter to such friends as you think well, but I hope you will not make any direct request for pecuniary help, either for myself or for the Mission. Whilst thankful for any assistance that may be given, I dread the thought of a gift bestowed grudgingly, or of asking those to contribute who are already taxing themselves to the utmost to do good."

The next Sunday it was opened. Into those small, low rooms, sixty ragged children were crowded, and in the evening it was filled with the poor people of the streets close about, mostly strangers to any place of worship. Travers writes of the opening with tremulous joy:—

"I spoke to the people last night on the words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." They seemed to me such a beautiful beginning of this mission to the poor. I am looking forward to Sunday, as I have not done for many, many years. Yet we need to remember amidst our thankfulness that the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. It is a broken and a contrite heart which He will not despise."

Afraid of being too much lifted up about it! He must needs be more afraid, then, for from many a quarter unexpected help pours in upon him; not only money from wealthier friends, but more touching offers still. One man, a painter, "is going to put up a board with the words 'Home Mission and Sunday School,' at his own expense, and also has given a subscription of five shillings." Another "is going to lend us a box of moveable letters for teaching our young ones." While of a third he writes, "I shall have to stop F.'s flow of benevolence, and yet I do not know whether it is right to do so. He has given me two volumes of Alford, then a subscription to the mission of ten shillings, and now he wants to pay for the letter being printed." Nay, do not check them! Who has learnt, if you have not, the truth of that old word, "It is more blessed to give than to receive!"

After a couple of months in the little Lord Street

cottage, which was far too small, he was able to take a better room, almost close by:—

"*Manchester, July* 15, 1861.

"We were so happy yesterday in our new room, that I do not know how to be thankful enough for the change. It is only a small room after all, holding about 120 people, but it is very light, and clean, and airy. Several new scholars came, in consequence of the change. In the evening, the room was well filled. Franklin preached delightfully on Titus ii. 14, just following the text through, step by step; after which I explained the objects of the Mission, dwelling upon the use of such labour in such a district; and then referring to the nature of the work, and inviting help; and then speaking of the entirely undenominational character of the Mission. I spoke out fully on this point, saying how it was not those with whom one agreed in opinion merely that one had the greatest sympathy, but with those who were seeking to live closest to God, and were most earnestly looking to Jesus for deliverance and salvation. I said that the influence of their instructions, even though it might be mingled with what appeared to oneself erroneous, and that on important points, could not but be good; that we were apt to be very sensitive about differences of opinion—heresies as they are called—forgetting that the greatest of heresies is even the slightest breach of the law of love. I told them how there was no kind of judging amongst us, and spoke of the constraining love of Christ. There were a good many of the old Lower Mosley Street scholars there, with Charles Herford. Nat led the singing. There were several Quakers, some Methodists, several of the old Crown Street friends, of both sections, and Mr. R. and Mrs. W., and one or two more of the brethren who meet with them. It was very encouraging to find what a cordial response there was amongst all these to these views, which I had put forward as fully, and plainly, and strongly as I very well could."

There is not much to tell about his work. Teaching in the mornings at Mr. Sharpe's school—this also a mission in its way; for though it was but mathematics

he was doing with them, the lads there loved him as if he were their dearest friend,—the rest of every day was given to visiting among the poor houses, through all those squalid streets about his mission room. Praying with the sick, comforting the sorrowful, reading in poor neglected homes the words of life and peace,—everywhere welcomed almost as an angel visitant, a presence of sweet, kind, holy friendship; and, the Sunday through, among the ragged children in his Sunday school, with the old gentle word, the same kind beaming face which those who knew him so well remember,—thus the weeks and months passed quickly by. It was not all plain sailing; but, on the whole, he was very thankful, very hopeful. In December, 1861, he writes:—

"*Manchester, December* 4, 1861.

"Of course there have been trials and disappointments, and my path has been often very uncertain. All these doubts and difficulties and disappointments have formed a large part of my letters, I dare say, and given you perhaps a wrong idea of my life here. They have been the happiest nine months of my life, and I do desire to return to God my most humble and hearty thanks for all His goodness and loving-kindness, in lifting me up, and in appointing me a place and a work in His vineyard. The Lord *has* blessed me and kept me. He *has* made His face to shine upon me, and been gracious unto me. He *has* lifted up His countenance upon me, and given me peace."

Thus while his strength lasted. It was already failing. The raw, bitter winter was upon him; but he could not give way yet:—there was yet more work to be done.

THE LANCASHIRE DISTRESS.

All through that long, hard winter, he never failed in his Sunday work at his little Home Mission. Sunday by Sunday, without one gap, the memorandum book in which he noted down the places and subjects of his preaching, tells how faithfully he held to his post. At what cost he thus held to it, through what weakness and weariness of the flesh, we may gather from the state in which we find him as May comes in, with the strangely bright and sultry weather of that year:—

"I have been getting weaker," he wrote on May 6th, 1862, "and lost my appetite, and am breathing worse, and was quite exhausted with my work on Sunday. Yesterday morning I had to walk the enormous distance of two miles [from his teaching at Mr. Sharpe's school], not having my purse in my pocket. It took me an hour and a half, and I was obliged to lie on my bed afterwards till tea-time, and to go to bed about half-past eight. The rest did me good, and I am decidedly better to-day. I have got through my morning's work at Mr. Sharpe's, and as I now see I really must rest from my district for a day or two, I think it best to turn the spare time to account by getting a little sea air. I would have gone to my doctor but I knew he would require me to break my engagements, and I must, if possible, struggle on with them for six or seven weeks more."

In such a state was he when that terrible calamity never to be forgotten by Lancashire folk,—the cotton famine caused by the American civil war,—rose like a

dark heavy cloud over the life of the people. It was a time to try all men who lived in those factory districts—what stuff they were made of, what hearts they had in them; to test to the uttermost whatever of self-denial and faith and patient helpful wisdom they possessed. Already work was running short, and Travers was visiting, day by day, among those poorest of the poor, dwelling mostly in the border land of shiftless semi-pauperism, among whom bad times are most immediately felt. Things were bad already, no one could tell how even the summer was to be passed through; what should it be when winter came? Travers felt he could not leave his post. It seemed to him as if there was more need than ever for him to keep his teaching engagements, and earn every penny he could. If he could manage to hold on till the Midsummer holidays, then he might snatch a month at his beloved Cromer, to recruit himself for those hard winter months that were in store.

He had his two days at Southport, but came back feebler than he went. The only remaining chance was Matlock, and accordingly he went there, "scarcely willingly, but almost by force," Mr. Sharpe, and Philip Carpenter (with whom he had lately been living, and who offered to take his teaching during his absence) having persuaded him. It went sadly against the grain, however;—"there is all this money for the poor lying idle, and lots of things neglected. One can only take refuge in 'it is the Lord's will.'" It was only for a few days, however. Sunday, May

26, he was again at his post in the mission, cheerful as ever, but very feeble. "The air is almost as destructive to me as the simoon" he writes, but still, day by day, through all that sultry May, he was spending many hours in going about among the poor back streets and courts of Hulme. There was no lack of help. He had "all this money for the poor," before he went to Matlock, and now Mrs. Gaskell finds him more, and many a friend, even in distant places, is glad to make him their almoner. "Miss B." (one of his pupils) "has given me £5. to-day for these poor people," he writes; and the lads in Mr. Hamilton Sharpe's school made a subscription among themselves, and spent it in bread-tickets, which were sent to Travers to distribute. Nor were the necessities of his own little mission school forgotten. Whitsuntide was drawing on,—the great Sunday-school festival in Manchester, when all the schools have treats and excursions. Whitsuntide had always been a great time with Travers. In the old Lower Mosley Street days, he had always loved to go with the scholars to Dunham Park, then the favourite resort, and rejoiced in all the happiness which the country sights and sounds brought to the little ones out of the Manchester courts and alleys. Those were some of his merriest days. The children thronged about him and did what they liked with him. It would have been a great delight to him, to take these poor little ragged scholars of his Home Mission out into the country. But, alas, all his means were needed for the distress, and he had no heart to ask money

for holiday-making. So here came a pleasant surprise:—

"*Manchester, May* 29, 1862.

"Another act of kindness I heard of yesterday. The teachers of Lower Mosley Street school heard through Lizzie Dumville (who, you remember, is one of our teachers) that we were short of money for Whitsuntide, and are making a collection for us amongst themselves of their own accord. It is likely to amount to £2 or £3, I believe. Dear old Tom Birch is busy about it."

Meanwhile, the times were only darkening. Before Midsummer he was writing:—"Things are getting worse and worse. You cannot tell what scenes of sorrow and distress I have witnessed this week. I sent twelve cases one night to the Provident Society, and next week I shall send them a lot more." He might well feel it hard to tear himself away, half doubtful, too, whether, if he once gave in, he should ever be able to return again. This—from one who always tried to put the best face on things, and only wrote about his health, even to his friends at his Norwich home, on repeated importunities—was rather a gloomy prospect:—

"I have no doubt Cromer will revive me very much; but I cannot help feeling that, with my glands swelling, and what appears very like an abscess forming in one of my cheeks, I cannot expect to be good for very much when I return. These matters must have their own slow way, and keep one all along rather in poor condition and spirits for work."

Midsummer came slowly on, however, and with it his promised holiday. Three peaceful, happy weeks, refreshing alike to soul and body, he had at Cromer.

His dear Norwich friends were with him there, and there were wonderful welcomings and greetings from the scholars and teachers in the little Methodist school, who all looked to him as their father. It was soon over, however. July 17th, we have a letter written back to the friends he had left there, a hasty pencil note, scribbled down at the Euston Station, just before going up to Highbury for a few days at his father's; after which—Manchester, and work, once more! A bright, hopeful little letter, overflowing with thankfulness and encouragement:—

"And now this long looked-for time has come to an end, and rather than grieve over our parting I feel we ought to thank God for the truly blessed season we have had together, and go hopefully and cheerfully to the work He sets before us. He will call us to nothing for which He will not give the strength and the grace we need."

It is needless to follow the story of the labours of that year, in all its sad monotony of ministering among ever deepening poverty. "I have been all day long, morning, noon, and night, visiting my poor people." This scrap from one letter might be the record of almost every day, except so far as most of his days were still partly engaged among Mr. Hamilton Sharpe's lads. "Sometimes the distress seems perfectly appalling," he writes. Yet he is not appalled. Weak as he is, for the Cromer visit had only been a little respite from the insidious progress of the consumption that was at last wearing him away, he holds relentlessly on to his work. Is the secret of his tenacity in the quiet hour, before his each day's work begins?

Here is a little glimpse at one of those morning hours :—

"*Wednesday, August* 13, 1862.

"I wonder whether you are enjoying Isaiah as much as I am doing. This morning I have been reading the prophecy beginning at the 5th verse of the 10th chapter, and could not leave off till I reached its close at the end of the 12th. What a tide of destructive scenes coming rapidly upon Jerusalem, advancing from town to town, and village to village, nearer and nearer still, till it receives its sudden check; the wave when just about to burst and overwhelm and destroy, must yet at God's command 'its awful distance keep.' Then follows the deliverance, temporal and spiritual, of the 11th chapter, the rod that is to spring out of the stem of Jesse, the universal peace, the ingathering of the nations, and the beautiful songs of joy and salvation and praise to the Lord with which the whole concludes. It ought all to be read together. Lowth's translation of Isaiah is beautiful, and his notes are a great help. I hope you have got it. What a beautiful expression that is, "with joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation." And then to think how the Saviour loved these words, and when the people were shouting them aloud, how he stood up and cried saying, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink." It is very delightful in reading the old Testament, to think how he read it, he who had been the inspirer of its precious promises, how he drew out of it help in his time of need, and saw in it, and shewed to his disciples, its fulfilment in himself. This is the way I desire to read it, and I often wonder that the rough hands of critics are not a little restrained by such considerations."

The chief interest of his letters, however, centres in the one all-absorbing subject of the constantly-increasing distress of the people. He was exerting himself in many ways. Sometimes he was attending at the places where the public relief was distributed; and, known as he was to so many both among the

distributors and the poor, he was able to exercise some influence to help the smoother working of a charity which, when it is systematised, is so apt to become hard.

"*Southport, September* 30, 1862.

"It was a great comfort last Saturday night to see the relief given in quite a different spirit from the week before. The people went away well pleased and thankful. There are a great many whom I know, and I like to be present to speak with them, and say anything I can on their behalf. It was all so friendly and brother-like on Saturday, that everybody felt happier for coming, instead of going away grieved."

Now and then he snatched a day for rest. The letter from which this last scrap is taken was written from Southport; but his preaching register shews that it was only a day or two's absence between the Sundays. Again, in November, he has "a day's entire rest at Bury," when, what he hears of and sees, sets him writing a letter that will be read with interest by many, distant from Lancashire, who remember the charges of selfishness and shabbiness that were brought against the employers of the cotton districts. Travers was one whose idea of what they ought to do would certainly be high enough, and, therefore, his word of vindication deserves to be recorded :—

"*Manchester, Nov.* 7, 1862.

"I have had a day's entire rest at Bury, which has done me a great deal of good; but I return to so much that wants doing, that I become alarmed almost at looking at it. I could not see so much of Franklin as usual, for they are, of course, as busy at Bury, as we are in Manchester. Indeed it is wonderful to think of the efforts that are being put forth, and the amount of mental and bodily labour and business talent constantly being devoted

to one object, in every town and village in these cotton districts. Ladies and gentlemen, all at work; schools, committees, &c. without number. I do think that the charges of *The Times* against the people of the north are very much exaggerated. This amount of personal labour shews the state of feeling here, and it is very much borne out by the liberality with which distress is relieved. There are exceptions, of course, but it should be remembered that there is a great deal done which never appears in public subscription lists. The best millowners give a day's wages, or two days, or in one case I know three days' wages to their hands, and it is only known in their neighbourhood. In the country districts, the mill hands generally live in houses belonging to the millowners, and these, of course, have the rents remitted, at any rate, for the present,—in many cases, I have no doubt, altogether. Perhaps, too, while their mills are lying idle, the masters are paying £1,000 or £2,000 poor-rate. From all I see and hear, I should say that as a general thing the masters and their families are exerting themselves well, both in pecuniary help and personal labour; but that far greater efforts will be needed is too plainly evident, and I cannot help thinking that ultimately we must look for a government grant."

A little while, and the winter is upon them. And with all that the people of the district can do, and all that can be done by the willing hands of young and old throughout England, and away in the Colonies, aye, and even in stricken and mourning America, there is all too little to stem the great tide of misery that sets in stronger and stronger as the dark, long November nights draw on. November 11th, he writes: "I dare not enquire who have got blankets where I visit, for my little store would be exhausted in no time." Here is a chapter out of his daily life, with all its varied work:—

"*Manchester, Nov. 24th,* 1862.

"I spent the chief part of yesterday in trying to divide into

classes and bring into some kind of order, the schools connected with the Institute for the unemployed. There were about 200 men, who were divided into eighteen classes of ten each, the rest acting as teachers. They have to sit very closely packed together in a low ceilinged room; but it is a great thing that the men should spend their time in something useful, and I only hope that the order which I endeavoured to bring about may be preserved till I go there again next Monday. I was thoroughly fagged out for our class meeting last night, and scarcely knew what I said.

"I have attended two interesting meetings this week. Mr. Radcliffe is very unwell, but spoke earnestly towards the close. The following evening I drank tea with the friends who arrange for the special services. Three or four friends came over from Liverpool, and there was an interesting conference. Some difficulties arise from the cold indifference or active opposition of ministers who do not seem much to like these lay efforts, and do not receive with much kindness the converts who may wish to join their churches. One of the Liverpool friends was a young Lockhart, who was known to me, and I to him, by report. He was at Bury a few weeks since, and is an intimate friend of Mr. Hoyland's, at Liverpool. He is a fine athletic young man, and was reckoned one of the best cricketers in the country. He has a frank and open way about him, which draws one to him at once; but he does not speak many words before one is drawn to him by a better and stronger tie.

"I must bring my letter to a close; I fell asleep over it many times, and I ought to be out amongst my poor people. All the morning I have been at Mr. Sharpe's. At six, I am to drink tea with Mr. Birch, to confer with him about starting a school for the boys and girls who are younger than any yet seen after, and whom it seems to me a great pity to be left to form idle habits—from 12 to 15. We can have a rather tumble-down room rent free, and I am likely to have the means of supporting a man who might superintend it at fifteen shillings a week, if I can meet with a decidedly Christian man out of employment, and having a family, to whom it would be well to make this allowance. Some young men in London want to support two families in this way."

"At half-past seven I must be at my Greek class. Two great

bundles (of old clothes) have come in, and are now in the hall, unpacked."

Heavy and varied labour enough, this, for an invalid, whose friends, every time they met him, were beseeching him to go away for rest, only to be answered, however, with his old happy smile, that he hadn't time to think about that: organising schools for the unemployed, attending religious meetings,—this "Mr. Radcliffe" was Richard Radcliffe, the revivalist,—at Mr. Sharpe's "all the morning," and with his "Greek class at half-past seven." And now there was more coming upon him. In the urgency of their want, the poor, to whom he was so well known, could not let him alone, even in his lodgings.

"I begin to have a bevy of people every afternoon at two o'clock," he writes on November 25th. "To-day it has taken an hour and a half to examine into their wants, and give them petticoats, &c. It is quite untrue that we are inundated with clothing; we can neither get it nor distribute it at anything like the rate that it is needed. Thousands and thousands in our Hulme district are sleeping night after night in this severe season without sheet or blanket, in many cases with only straw or shavings."

So, till Christmas, 1862. He just held on till then. Already, on Sundays November 30th and December 7th, I find the entry, "Ill; P. P. Carpenter preached;" yet he was at his post again the two following Sundays. Then there comes a long gap for nearly four months; the next entry in his little preaching register is April 12th, 1863.

These four intervening months were spent in efforts after, not health, but just so much strength as might

enable him to take up his work for a little longer, if so might be the will of God. He went home to Norwich just before Christmas Day, and the rest there, and the joy of being with his old and dearest friends, seemed to revive him; and with the sorrowful need of his poor people haunting him, he felt in a fortnight as if he might return to Manchester, intending to recruit for a few days more on the way at Mr. Smedley's establishment, at Matlock Bank. He was at Derby Station on his way thither on January 8th, and wrote thus, waiting for the Matlock train :—

"*Derby Station, January* 8, 1863.

"My dearest ones, I do really seem to be all right again. I am not at all over-tired with my journey to-day; but then what a most lovely day it has been! All the pleasant country from Peterborough to Derby has looked delightful in the clear air and bright sun. There must have been a great deal of rain lately. Everywhere the waters are out, in the valley of the Trent as well as the Ouse. Mark Wade and his charge were at the Ely station. He helped me with my luggage across the line. There was a young soldier with me in the carriage whom I remember as a boy in St. Miles—the son of Durrant or Duffield, the grocer there. He first recognised me."

"I do feel thankful to have been permitted again to rest and regain my strength, in the quiet haven of your dear care—and now to have the prospect of returning to my poor people in Manchester. May the beautiful mingling of thankfulness and trust of the 23rd psalm which we read this morning, be ever ours! God bless you ever, my dear ones, and make you more and more a blessing to others."

But it was only the influence of the "lovely day." As soon as he got to Matlock, it was evident to everybody that to go on to Manchester would only be to go on to *die.* He struggled against the conviction :—

"*Matlock Bank*, 12*th Jan.*, 1863.

"I think I have a battle to fight with myself, and that mine is a languor which I must not indulge. It is an effort for me to do anything but sleep, and eat, and loll upon the sofa; an effort to walk, to talk, to read, to bathe; but I think this is very much the habit I have got into. My breathing still much the same."

The day following he could only write, in pencil, lying on the sofa—"Unfortunately, my looks give the lie to all I say and feel; I may as well, therefore, return to Norwich at once;" and so, in two days, he was there once more, for two months, in the quiet home to which he ever turned for rest, and with the friends who watched over him as if he was their son.

By the middle of March, however, he was again in Manchester:—very grey he looked, and very thin and feeble, with a hectic flush on his cheeks, yet trying bravely to pass himself off for well and strong, laughing at the entreaties of friends, and bent on trying to take up his work where he had laid it down.

"I seem to be settling down to Manchester life once again," he wrote, quite cheerfully, on March 13th, from his old friend Charles Herford's, where he was to stay as long as he could be persuaded to do, before going into lodgings—"and, I hope, with some prospect of continuing here a little longer. This morning I returned to Mr. Sharpe's. He was very kind, and would not let me work more than two hours, and the boys were very good, and I took it as easily as I could." He went into lodgings again, however. Once more I find the record of his preaching at the little room; they were talking, too, of moving into a

better room that was to be had in the neighbourhood; and daily, in the afternoons, he went feebly down into the district, and for a few hours was visiting about among the sick and the poor. Often he was so weary that he was fain to go into a friend's house near, (Thomas Parry's, the same who helped him to carry those forms) to rest himself; but in a little while he would rise up again, saying, with his old smile, "I think I can manage to make another visit or two."

This could hardly last long. By April 29th,—"A new ailment has come upon me lately, I suppose a sign of weakness. My legs ache whenever I walk, and even when I sit, so that I am often glad to lie on the sofa." Yet see what his very next Sunday's work was!—

"*May 4th*, 1863.

"I was very busy yesterday. Mr. Hewitt engaged with poor dying Mr. Jones. Thomas Parry not well, nor able to get to school till rather late. So I had to take charge of the school, and then to address the scholars at our morning service. I did not go in the afternoon till three o'clock, but had to see a poor old dying woman on my way. She died a few minutes after I left. It is strange that I have never yet been present at the moment of death. After school, a teachers' meeting. Good Mr. Rowbotham took the whole of the evening service; 'Come unto me, &c.' We had the communion afterwards. Very quiet, and restful, and happy. I said a little on the words, 'according to your faith be it unto you,' which have been a good deal on my mind this last week. Mr. Rowbotham came here, and spent half an hour with me afterwards."

Yes, it had been strangely to him "according to his faith," but though the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak, and the intensest faith cannot quite dispense

with some answering strength of body. By the beginning of June, he was beginning to long to be out of this harassing mission responsibility :—

"*Manchester, June 5th*, 1863.

"You wish to know how I *really* feel. A great, great deal better than when I was at Norwich—but weaker than I was before my illness,—not able to walk quickly, and soon tired with visiting, or much noise and bustle. I should not care if I had not the anxiety of the Mission upon me, but I feel that I have no 'go' in me, to work this at all efficiently, and this is a constant burden and sorrow to me.

"If there were any way of getting out of it without sending 160 children adrift, I should be most thankful to be working in a subordinate situation."

Across the top of this letter are pencilled, as a postcript, the words "*This day three weeks!*"—significant testimony to the eagerness with which he was looking on to holidays and rest. He thought they would set him up once again.

And when they came, for the moment they seemed to do. He had a few very happy weeks, just resting quietly at Highbury, and then at Norwich. Then for another time he tore himself away,—it could not be that he should not see his work again; but even as he journeyed northward, his touching note (written at Peterborough, in pencil) testifies against the cheerful words of hope with which he had set off :—

"I have a feeling, dearest ones, that this is only a short parting; it scarcely seems to me a parting at all. In His own good time, God will make all plain. These few weeks together are very precious to look back upon. I feel better prepared for whatever may be the will of God. But it is only by His grace constantly sought, and constantly given, that one's own self-will

can be kept from rising up to oppose. The failure of hopes and plans has always led me into great darkness and sorrow hitherto. But you will pray for me, and my earnest prayer is—'The will of the Lord be done.'"

His foreboding was only too true. It was on the 16th July that he wrote this. In the middle of the next week he wrote, joyfully, "they are going to enter on their new room next Sunday;" and then, August 7th, his letter is dated from *Bury*. Illness has come on again; he has been obliged to bid farewell to Manchester. It must have been a great disappointment to him—but it is the Lord's will—that is his thought. So he tries to make the best of it, persuades himself that his presence, weak as he was, "only hindered others from taking that active part which they will now feel necessary."

"Whenever I have left Manchester before, there has been something wrong or hasty in me, but this seems to be quite 'of the Lord,' and I leave behind no trouble in the little flock."

FADING AWAY.

THE story of his active life is told. Two years there yet remain, but two years of weakness only, and the painful seeking for a strength that would not come; two years of patient, cheerful suffering, and of ever happier looking onward to the quiet end. It were only a mournful task to trace his life all through these years, and note down the alternations in his health, and his long restings here and there. But from time to time, we come upon traces of the spirit in which he bore all that weariness and pain and hopeless seeking for health, which we cannot bear to lose.

The year that he left Manchester, he went for some time into Wales, travelling slowly from place to place. At one time he was at Llandudno, staying awhile with his old friend Mr. Henry Enfield. Then he was at Swansea, at the Mumbles, with Mrs. Byers, his mother's sister, to whom he was deeply and tenderly attached. I find among his papers some lines, to me very touching and beautiful, which seem by their endorsement to have been written here :—

> I plead thy promises, O Lord,
> And in a Saviour's name,
> Approach thy throne of grace and love,
> Blest in this holy claim.

Thy thoughts are not our thoughts, O God,
  Neither Thy ways our ways,
But all events, controlled by Thee,
  Are monuments of praise.

When all creation owns thy sway,
  And love directs the whole,
Do I not hear these words of peace?
  "Tis God preserves thy soul!"

If tribulation be my path,
  Crushed by disease and pain,
We know, to reach eternal life,
  Meek suffering will be gain.

I thus will cling to thee, my God,
  To thee commit my grief,
And in my blessed Saviour's words
  Find all my soul's relief.

'Come unto me, thou weary one,
  'With grief and pain oppressed,
'My yoke is easy,—burden light,
  'And I will give thee rest!'"

Chiefly in Norwich, with occasional visits here and there, the year 1864 passed away. He had latterly been much drawn towards the Church of England, attending its services, and by and by he undertook a little visiting amongst the poor in connexion with a neighbouring church. This beginning again of his old work brought back longings for Manchester. He would fain go and see his old friends there again, and once more share their work, if it might be. In the summer of 1865, he went to Mr. Howorth's at Bury, and used to go over to Manchester to see what he could do. But it could not be; his strength and voice

entirely failed him, and once and again he returned, utterly exhausted, to Mr. Howorth's. It was a last effort. Weary and broken down, he went once more to Cromer, where for a little while he revived. An old friend from London, who was with him there, has told me of this time, and of the deep impression his intercourse with Travers made upon him; his quiet enjoyment of the beauties of the outward world, and his deep spiritual insight into Scripture. His ardent desire to penetrate more deeply into Scripture grew daily. One of his most favourite texts was, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." The Bishop of Norwich was at Cromer at this time, and, as was his habit, held frequent Scripture readings at Lady Buxton's, and Travers was often at these meetings, and was very deeply impressed by them. Shortly after his return to Norwich, a wish which had for some time been in his heart was accomplished,—he was baptised into the Church of England, and ever after partook of the communion, and attended the Church services, though he was often so weak that he hardly knew how, even with many rests, to get there. He taught in the Sunday school connected with the church which he attended, and also in the week evening classes, until his voice became so weak that he could not be heard at all; and still he took his favourite walk along the beautiful Thorpe road, past the house where he was born, and past the Rosary Burial Ground, where all that was mortal of him was so soon to be laid. With a great effort he went to London at Christmas, to see his father, and, speaking

very happily of his visit, closes his last letter to his Norwich home with these words, written on New Year's Day :—

"I had again a delightful time (for the close of the year) in my father's study for an hour or two after tea, reading the evening prayers, and a beautiful sermon of Dr. Vaughan's, closing with these words, which seemed to me to fit in with the closing year:—'Much loved, much forgiven, stay with thy Saviour! Stay with Him in all offices of prayer and praise. Stay with Him in the exercise of an open-handed and open-hearted charity; freely thou hast received, freely give! Stay with Him, above all, in a watchful life and in a chastened spirit. Fearing always, because prizing His presence; because unwilling to forfeit that which it cost Him humiliation, suffering, and death to earn for thee! Yet also hoping alway, and alway rejoicing; knowing that he is faithful who promises; able to keep that which is committed unto Him against that day.'"

"Much loved, much forgiven, stay with thy Saviour!" These words went home to his heart. They seemed like a voice to him out of his own life. It was that thought that was ever with him.

He returned very soon to Norwich, for this had been his home so long that he could not rest in his weakness anywhere else. But it was only to grow feebler and feebler every day. First he had to give up going to church: he had managed to creep there as long as he could, leaning upon a friend's arm, but one day he was very ill after it, and seemed as if he would hardly rally from the exhaustion, and he never attempted it again. He never left the house any more.

By frequent change of rooms he got all the fresh air that was possible; but the effort to move from

room to room soon grew too much for him. Additional medical advice was called in; but the only suggestion that could be made was, that he should be moved to a warmer part of England, where he could live out of doors. The time seemed past, however, for this; and when it was mentioned to Travers, he at once begged that it might not be thought of. He could not feel it his duty to make such an effort only for the *possibility* of prolonging his life a few months; and so the idea was given up, and nothing remained but to comfort and alleviate those weary days of suffering as far as it was possible. His cough and breathing grew daily more distressing, and his weakness often so great that the least movement took away his breath. Yet it seemed as if the thought of God's wonderful love swallowed up everything else. The only time when he was moved from his sweet tranquillity of soul, was one day in listening to the 14th chapter of St. John. The love which breathes through it quite overpowered him. He burst into tears, saying, "How wonderful—such love—to us!" and it was long before the worn-out frame could regain its quiet. Heaven and a blessed re-union seemed so near to him, that the grief of parting was done away. And yet he did not forget those whom he was leaving behind. Throughout the close of his long and rapidly increasing illness, he was always thinking of others; though often, when he was planning what he should wish done for different people, he would close his eyes and say, "I cannot think; I will leave it all to you; you will know all that I wish."

Among the papers which he used to have about him,

now and then writing a little as he lay on his sofa, was found after his death, a prayer written at this time, asking God's blessing on his friends, especially those who would most need His comfort; humbly seeking for forgiveness and acceptance through Jesus Christ, and earnestly desiring that the Holy Spirit might open his eyes and give him a deeper insight into the treasures of truth stored up in the Holy Scriptures; and finally praying "that the remainder of his life might be a daily ripening for the kingdom of God." And so it was indeed. Through all those days and weeks of trial and suffering, there was not one word or look of weariness. Patience had her perfect work. His only distress was that "he gave so much trouble," as he said, little knowing the joy it was to do the least thing for him. Always after breakfast he liked a little reading aloud, a passage of Scripture, and then a chapter of Monod's "Farewell," which he was reading to the last. Sometimes he would dictate a letter to some old friend, a loving farewell to those he had laboured with in years long gone by. A letter from Richard Wade, one of his oldest Lower Mosley Street friends, which came at this time, filled his eyes with tears and his heart with grateful love to God for crowning his days with so much happiness. It was a great joy to him to feel that of all the friendships which he had formed not one had ever been broken.

But the one absorbing feeling from which all others flowed, was the love of Christ. This filled his soul and illuminated his life. As he grew weaker he could only bear to have a single verse of Scripture

repeated at a time—or a verse from some hymn he knew and loved. Still he would sometimes sit up and write a little. One day it was this he copied, saying it was the story of his own life :—

"O Saviour, I have nought to plead
In earth beneath or heaven above,
But just my own exceeding need,
And thy exceeding love.

The need will soon be past and gone,
Exceeding great but quickly o'er ;
The love, unbought, is all thine own,
And lasts for evermore !"

Early in March his father came from London to see him once again, and his dear old friend, Franklin Howorth, came from Bury to bid him farewell. His father's visit was a great pleasure to him. If he was too weak to talk to him, he liked to have him sitting by his sofa ; and before he went to bed at night his father read some portion of Scripture and prayed with him, and often in the day Travers said how delightful this was to him.

But the time soon came when he could no longer bear the fatigue of coming downstairs, or the exertion of hearing much reading. If a friend came and read and talked with him, it quite exhausted him, and he would say afterwards to his usual reader, "I want your *few* words." He liked, to the last, however, to have family worship in his room, and almost the last night he had all the doors open that he might hear his favourite hymn played down stairs :—

"Sun of my soul, thou Saviour dear !"

He got up and was dressed and helped to his sofa, even to the last day, March 22nd, 1866, but that day was a weary one, from the extreme difficulty of breathing, and other distressing symptoms, and nothing that was done gave him any relief. Towards night he grew worse; both cough, and breathing, and pain in the chest were most distressing; but in the midst of it the old sweet smile shone over his face as he said with difficulty, "It is God's will," as if that made all smooth and easy. He seemed too ill for all the household to gather in his room that night, but one or two kneeled with his father round his bed, to seek the support and comfort which could come from God alone. And then his father left him, to go home to the friends with whom he was staying, little thinking that he should see him no more in life. So the evening wore on, and the quiet night came; and gradually, the distressing cough abated, and the breathing grew easier, and he fell into a little sleep.

By and by he woke once more; and suddenly raising himself up from the pillows on which he had been supported, he began to speak, first in a low, inaudible whisper, but gradually increasing in power, until he spoke in as clear and thrilling tones as he ever did when preaching, in his days of health and strength. His mind, which lately had been so weakened by illness, that he had only been able to take in a word of Scripture at a time, seemed suddenly to regain all its powers of thought and memory. It was as if he were inspired. His eyes, wide open, were fixed upwards, as if he already saw into the celestial city; while

passage after passage from different parts of the Bible flowed from his lips in a sort of rapture. The joy of going "where there was no sin" was the burden of his thoughts. "All purity and holiness—holiness to the Lord,—holy as he is holy!" The blessedness of heaven, which he seemed to be beholding, almost overpowered him; and he broke forth, with quite a loud voice, almost singing the words,—

> "O for a thousand tongues to sing
> My great Redeemer's praise!"

Then he repeated parts of other hymns, especially of that one of which he was always particularly fond:—

> "For ever with the Lord!"

He repeated the words with a rapture that cannot be described—"For ever—ever!" They seemed to fill his whole soul. His face was as though he saw straight through the valley of the shadow of death to the city where "there is no night." The parting with earth was over, and it almost seemed as if those who were watching by him had come with him into the glory beyond.

Gradually his voice grew fainter and fainter till it was only a whisper. The last words that could be heard were—

> "With God eternally shut in."

And then his eyes closed, and he sunk into a deep calm sleep, from which he never woke on earth. "No more fatigue, no more distress," now. The cough was gone, and the breathing came gently

and easily, and so he lay for a long time, until the dawn of another day was stealing into the room. Gradually the breathing became fainter and slower, and sometimes was only a long sigh. Still he slept on—until at last there was no sound—no motion. The spirit was gone to God who gave it. And over the face a light was dawning such as is never seen in life—the reflection of those glories which "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive," but which "God hath prepared for them that love Him."

There is a passage in a letter of Travers's, written long years ago, which wonderfully and prophetically describes the close of his life—"I think if I had never forgotten myself before, I should at my dying hour. I imagine all heaven would be open to one's view—futurity present—and the boundless love of God entirely absorb one's thoughts." That hour had come. Trial, and sorrow, and suffering were over. His life was hid with Christ in God, and death was swallowed up in victory.

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